

OUR THANKS

Our collective thanks goes out to everyone's that pitched in to make this publication possible. Without everyone specific contributions we would not have been able to put this volume together.

Special thanks goes out to Murrup barak and it's Associate Director Charles O'Leary. Without the financial support of the centre, under Bunjil would not exist. Your reinvigorated devotion to student programs and leadership means that we have the support necessary invest in an array of student led endeavours, of which Under Bunjil continues to be one of the most impressive.

Once again, thank you to the UMSU Media Officers for your ongoing collective

support as we attempt to try new things with what is still a new publication. Special shoutout to Baya, for your willingness to show us the ropes and for assisting with even the smallest of questions (which we understand must have taken a great deal of patience).

To our long list of contributors, thank you so much for your hard work in creating content for us to share. Without contributors there is no Under Bunjil - your work is the lifeblood of this publication. We are so incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together, we hope you are too!

Too all our supporters and readers thank you for picking us up! We hope you enjoy the publication

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 YOU HEAR WHAT YOU WANT / SERENA THOMPSON
 BOOTSTRAPS AND LEATHER / MONICA MCDONALD
 MORE THAN ONE / INDIAH MAKEHAM
 NO LONGER A SECRET / INDIAH MAKEHAM
 MY MOTHER / INDIAH MAKEHAM

ART

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 LAMENT / GENEVIEVE GRIEVES
 SWADDLE ME / PIERRA VAN SPARKES
 BLACKFULLA BINGO / PIERRA VAN SPARKES

COMMENTARY

WHY YOU NEED TO VOTE / ZAC COLLINS-WIDDERS
 TICKING THE BOX / ELLEN PETTY
 ABORIGINAL VOICES IN ONLINE SPACES / YARRAMUN CONOLE
 MINORITY WITHIN THE MINORITY / ALEXANDRA HOHOI
 CULTURE AND THE INSTAGRAM AGE / CARISSA LEE GODWIN
 NATIONAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY / CAMERON MCBROOM
 WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS / EMILY KAYTE JAMES
 MY TOUNGE IS MY SPEAR / TYRONE BEAN

MEET YOUR EDITORS



Emily James / Gunditjmara / Yorta-Yorta / Arts

Emily is completing a major in Australian Indigenous Studies and a minor in Sociology, while also currently serving as the sole Office Bearer for the UMSU Indigenous Department. Emily is passionate about adapting the University and its colleges to better suit the needs of Indigenous students. As a senior student at Medley Hall Emily has seen this passion into action, by founding the Indigenous Student Club at Medley known as The Black Griffins. She believes that higher education is the key to self determination for all Indigenous people. Follow her on instagram @emkayte



Serena Thompson / Mamu Dugulburra / Waribarra / Arts

Serena is a proud Mamu Dugulburra and Waribarra woman from Far North Queensland, up on the Tableland region. She comes from a family of twelve children, where she is the seventh oldest, and only the second to go on to tertiary education. She is currently majoring in Creative Writing, with a minor in Australian Indigenous Studies. Serena hopes to find a career in editing and/or publishing, and to cement the presence of Indigenous people in the literary world, both creatively and academically.



Wunambi Connor / Gumbaynggirr / Kamilaroi / Kuwarra / Arts

Wunambi is currently completing a double major in Media and Communications, and Politics and International Studies. He is also the Team Manager for the Unimelb Indigenous University Games team heading to Brisbane in June. He is interested in the opportunities and programs that are created for young Indigenous people, particularly those that aim to develop their skills and passions. Wunambi is notorious for complaining, though often attempts to disguise it as feedback and commentary.



Pierra Van Sparkes / Bibbulman / Arts

Pierra is currently undertaking studies in Anthropology and Australian Indigenous Studies. One of her biggest passions is celebrating and exploring the diversity of Indigenous identities. Amidst such diversity, she is continuously fascinated and comforted by the shared feelings and encounters that shape an Aboriginal experience. Pierra also enjoys making things, as evident in the numerous pieces she submits for Under Bunjil, including the current cover illustration.



Marley Holloway-Clarke / Warramunga / Fine Arts

Marley family is from the Pilbara and the Kimberley. She lives at Trinity College where she is actively involved in sport and theatre. She is currently undertaking a Bachelor of Fine Art with a focus on photography. Her hobbies include feeling like the smart one in her friendship group and wasting her time trying to be organised.



Tyson Holloway-Clarke / Warramunga / Arts

Tyson has recently been elected as the President of UMSU. Notably, he is the First Indigenous man to serve in this role. While previously working as the Indigenous Office bearer, Tyson also founded Under Bunjil. Currently a history student, he is also a perpetual Trinitarian and Tyson will probably never leave until he can guarantee a higher standard of living.

EDITORIAL

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, study, and live; the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging, and recognise that this land was stolen and never ceded.

So for some of you, this will be the first time that you have picked up Under Bunjil, but hopefully there a few of you that have been following our story from the beginning - which was only a short year ago. Whilst the last edition did not go exactly to plan, in terms of breaking down the idea that sequels are rarely better than the original (blame formatting on Indesign) - third time is always the charm, so here we go. We are (clearly) still getting the hang of this whole editing and publishing thing, and just to clarify, this is definitely our third edition, not fourth. You may notice a few exciting new features this edition including glossy pages which are perfect for the extra visual artworks that have been submitted, a greater social media presence with links below to our Instagram and Facebook pages, and the first ever Blackfella Bingo.

This edition was also the first time that we welcomed Serena Thompson onto our editing team (yay!). Serena is a proud Murri who hopes to major in Creative Writing and go onto a career in the editing and publishing industry. Obviously she needs all the experience she can get, so it seemed only right that she would come onboard and help us with this enormous task and let us exploit her, for a bit of fun. For some reason we were surprised when it turned out that she was actually good at this sort of thing so instead of forcing her to fetch us coffee, we had to do it ourselves. But on the upside, less work for us!

For a while there, we were unsure as to whether Under Bunjil would continue to be a semesterly publication but, due to an unexpected flood of submissions, we gave into the pressure. As mentioned before, in this issue there is a larger focus on visual artworks but there was also a significant contribution of poetry put forward - so this is definitely a more arty-farty sort of thing which we were all (sort of) excited to start.

So the experienced editors immediately began stressing out and planning, whilst Serena was still quite relaxed and optimistic, not fully realising the shitshow she was getting herself into. In typical blackfella form, the ball was a bit slow to start because everyone submitted things on Koori time but when it started moving it quickly began spinning out of control. Several nights in a row, locked in the Indigenous Department offices, the excitement for Serena had begun to wear off and the insomnia and quiet insanity had sunk in. Everyone was set on edge, perfecting every last detail for the final product to be sent off to the printer. But thankfully we had only Lemonade to keep us sane. This rendition of pure perfection was played shamelessly on repeat, the lyrics burning into our subconscious until the frustration we felt at continuously reading over the same words for hours on end, slowly blurred into rage towards Jay-Z and Becky with the good hair.

But while we have much to thank Bey for, we do hope that you as a reader are able to appreciate the literal blood, sweat, and tears that the entire editing team put into this edition of Under Bunjil.

Yours sincerely,

Aunty with the good hair, Bambos, Serena Williams, Uncle Doctor AKA Prez T, the photographer, and the other photographer.

Facebook / UMSU Indigenous
Instagram / @UMSU_Indigenous
Email / indigenous@union.unimelb.edu.au

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this publication may contain images and names of deceased peoples.

Black Stats

Under Bunjil is back at it again with them Black Stats. This is our neat little way of letting everyone see the diversity within the Indig community at university and break down that pesky concept of pan-Aboriginality. So enjoy this little section and look forward to seeing some more faces in there, next time.

Indiah / Wiradjuri / Arts

Where you livin': Medley Hall
Record on Repeat: This must be the place by Talking Heads
Cult Follow: Party Monster
(re)Watch: Mr Nobody
What's in right now: Doing blackface in white culture
Fav threads: Fishnets or my overalls
Girl Crush: My sister (hehe)
Guy Crush: Jared Leto

Doodja / Barkindji & Nyoongar / Arts

Where you livin': Carlton
Record on Repeat: Photograph by Ed Sheeran
Cult Follow: Modern Family
(re)Watch: The Hobbit (All 3)
What's in right now: The Running Man
Fav threads: Socks and thongs
Girl Crush: Avril Lavigne
Guy Crush: C Breezy

Kristy / Gunditjmara / Science (Honours)

Where you livin': West Footscray
Record on Repeat: Say it by Flume
Cult Follow: Game of Thrones
(re)Watch: Rocky
What's in right now: Damn Daniel
Fav threads: White Nike Air Max runners
Girl Crush: Beyonce
Guy Crush: Chris Pratt

A photograph of a beach with driftwood and a blue sky. The foreground is filled with sand and scattered pieces of driftwood. In the middle ground, there is a large, tangled pile of driftwood. The background shows a calm sea and a distant shoreline with some buildings and trees under a clear blue sky.

POETRY

ARTWORK BY | PIERRA VAN SPARKES / BIBBULMAN / ARTS

I SWALLOW AND TAKE A BREATH

ALARA HOOD / KURNAI / ARTS

I swallow and take a breath
Because I shouldn't make a seen
When they say, "we can't fix the divides,
It's stitched into us to be afraid of the other"
Given facts that we will always be afraid of difference
And so I tremble, when people sigh
How are we to row forwards and against this all?
It's our nature, things raised to protect us.
That we can be
Hateful, quick to judge, even more so to fear
Yet we know to be that other, you are told to
Forget and to forgive
Even when there is still blood on roadsides

Kitchens are screaming
And home is inside bottle shells
We still have to dip and duck and become smaller
It's safer
As we in these classrooms are still smaller
It's normal
To be a single black face in a white space
But know that you fix that divide here
The waves will become warmer
After the storms and bashing currents
And even when your breath is burning
Tongue like ash
You will not be alone

YOU HEAR WHAT YOU WANT

SERENA THOMPSON / DUGULBURRA / WARIBARRA / ARTS

I want to tell you about being a blackfulla
and I want you to listen

Our history is not our history
my ancestors my stories my history my people
have been pushed to the side
pushed to the brink pushed too far
can't catch them in time

sit down feel the earth
smell the smoke hear my story and my ancestors

Our songlines have been intertwined since the ships
since first discovery terra nullius colonisation reconciliation
and yet we see the the story of my ancestors
continue to be overcast by a white shadow
by SORRY Closing The Gap and the communities not changing the date

get overwhelmed by the smoke choke
on the smoke it's white

we are a people of colour but
we are not just people of colour we don't all
come from abuse we are not alcoholics but some of us are
we are mothers with a baby on our hip and
a proud student with a graduate robe on

fan it away with your hand it comes back
back to the centre back to the circle

I should be pregnant my brothers
should have committed suicide and my parents
should be welfare-dependent but we are none of these
SORRY for not living up to the expectations
SORRY should fix everything

the breeze stops smoke goes up
through the trees the voice has an echo of generations

we learn what you teach us about
government structure and civilisation
you need to give us a chance
still new still learning still finding our feet
try not to use that as an excuse

add more leaves to flame smell the gum
burning it's always smelt like that hear the crackling

I try to learn to understand what you say
and what you mean I think I get it but when I
raise my hand you look away when I speak
I'm not heard not another
Aborigine complaining

You hear what you want
I hear a story of invasion
You hear a story of settlement

BOOT STRAPS AND LEATHER

MONICA MCDONALD / GUNAI / KURNAI / GUNDITJMARA / FINE ARTS

They say we come from many lands, and many men did come
to our land.

He saw the gums, the red rocks and roos, he felt the soil and
his pockets grew.

He did not have bare feet and spears; he had leather soles and
orange beards.

He did not feel mother earth in his toes, instead he cut her back
as he walked to and fro.

This man had plenty, garments and rubies and power galore,
but still he was hungry, still he wanted more.

Man is greedy and man is afraid so he slaughters the unknown
with his blade.

Caught up in wealth a superficial pursuit, he with the power
lacked a fundamental truth.

He would never hear the ancestors sing, nor would he feel their
spirits dance with the wind.

He would never know that men and women who were old
held knowledge and wisdom much more valuable than gold.
He would never feel the love and light that mother earth pores
out each day and night.

He would eat and drink until he could no more, indulge like a
taker, like when the waves take the shore.

He would not feel Bunjil looking over him and no dimes could
ever pay for his sins, ever pay for his crimes.

So when they say all that we have lost, we say no, it was taken,
who is ready to pay the cost?

228 years on from then we've been livin', but the truth it still
hides, it's time for it to be risen.



MORE THAN ONE

INDIAH MAKEHAM / WIRADJURI / ARTS

Through the swallows
the bubbling
the green luscious
of squarks
And the tough texture
that wraps them up
very tightly
within one another
As they are full of layers
many Complexities
such an intricate texture

NO LONGER A SECRET

INDIAH MAKEHAM / WIRADJURI / ARTS

The earth pulls us closer
until my grandchildren's hands
Tickle the rocks
for how weighed down
The pain and silence
that was passed onto me
just as my forefathers
carried it prior
now they follow suit

MY MOTHER

INDIAH MAKEHAM / WIRADJURI / ARTS

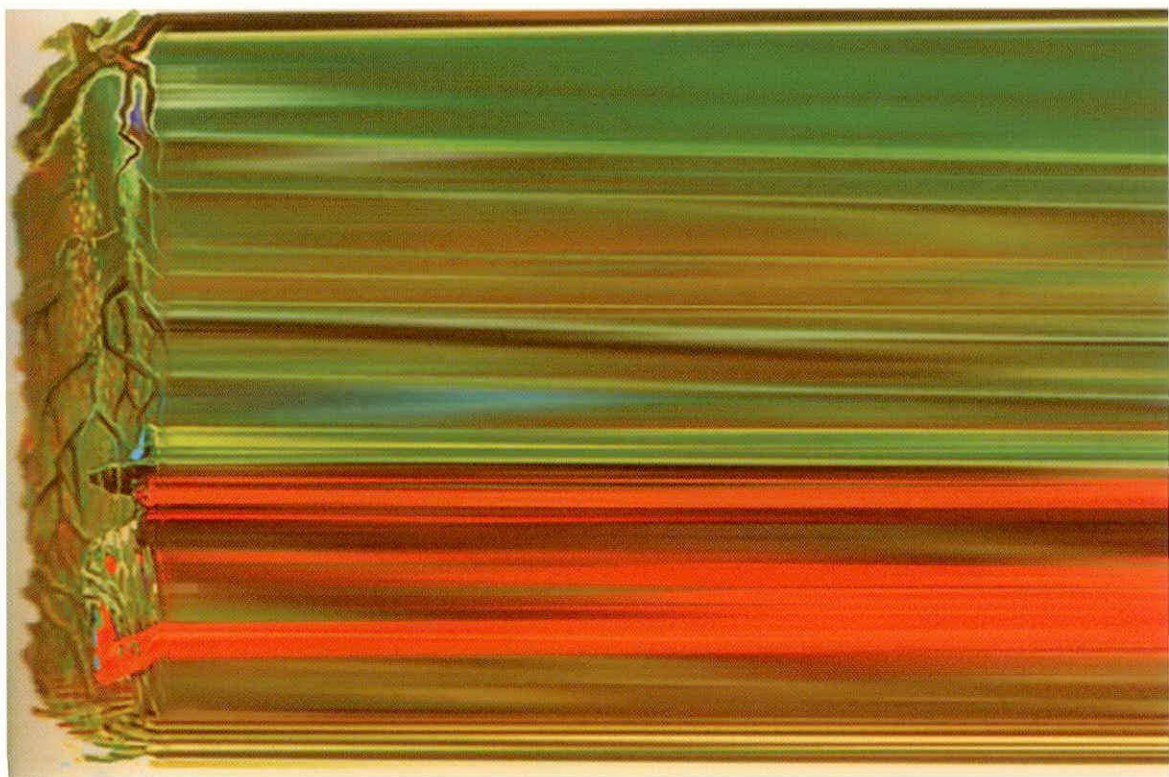
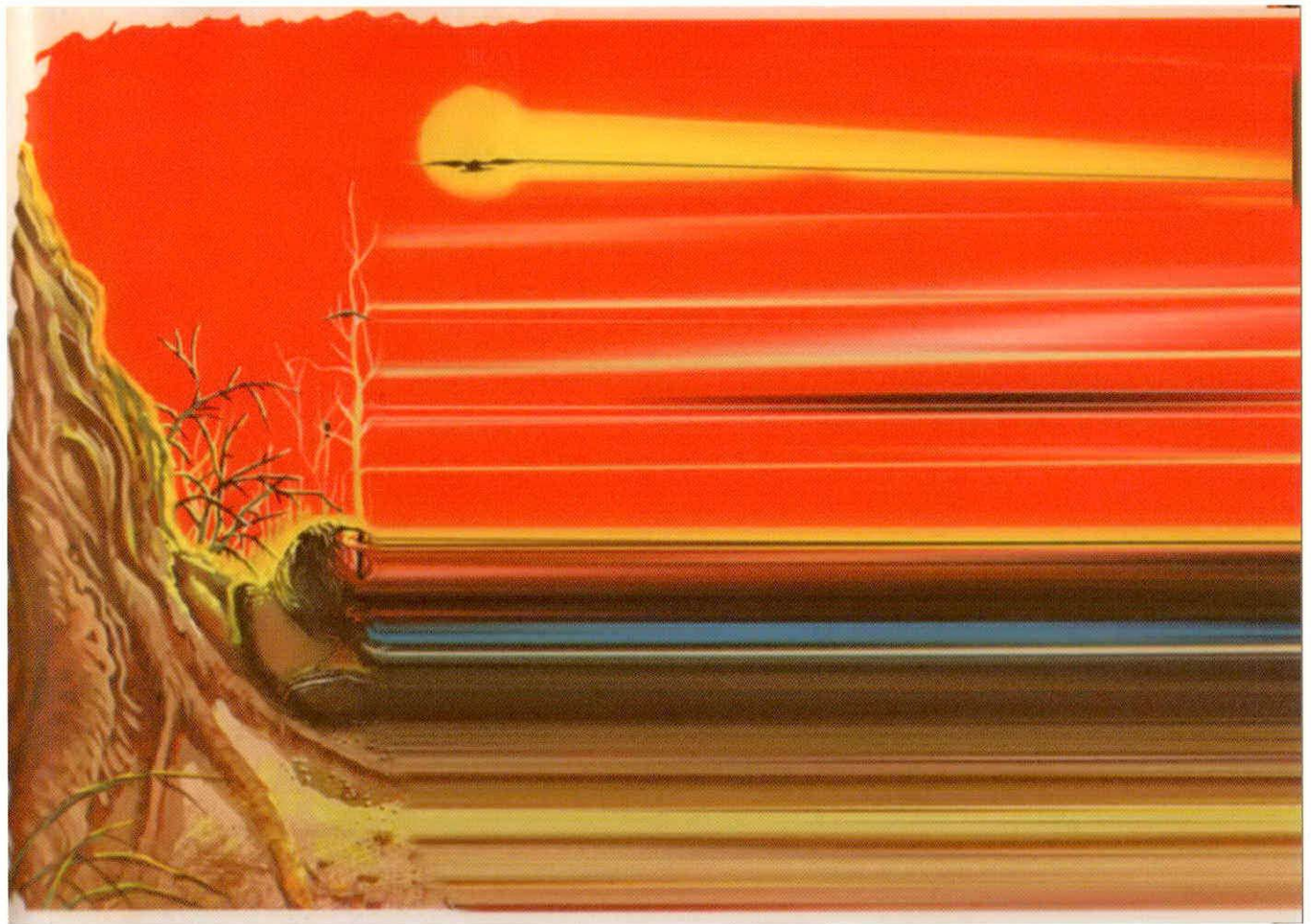
there is a pitter patter
pause
quietly walk
hurry hurry
as she moves with stealth
faster
running
trying to match pace
with the mother
of us kin
the mother of all

brown skin hiding
in trees
and the ground
next to my legs
under my feet
she moves silently
like the air
upon you
for you need it
and she loves you

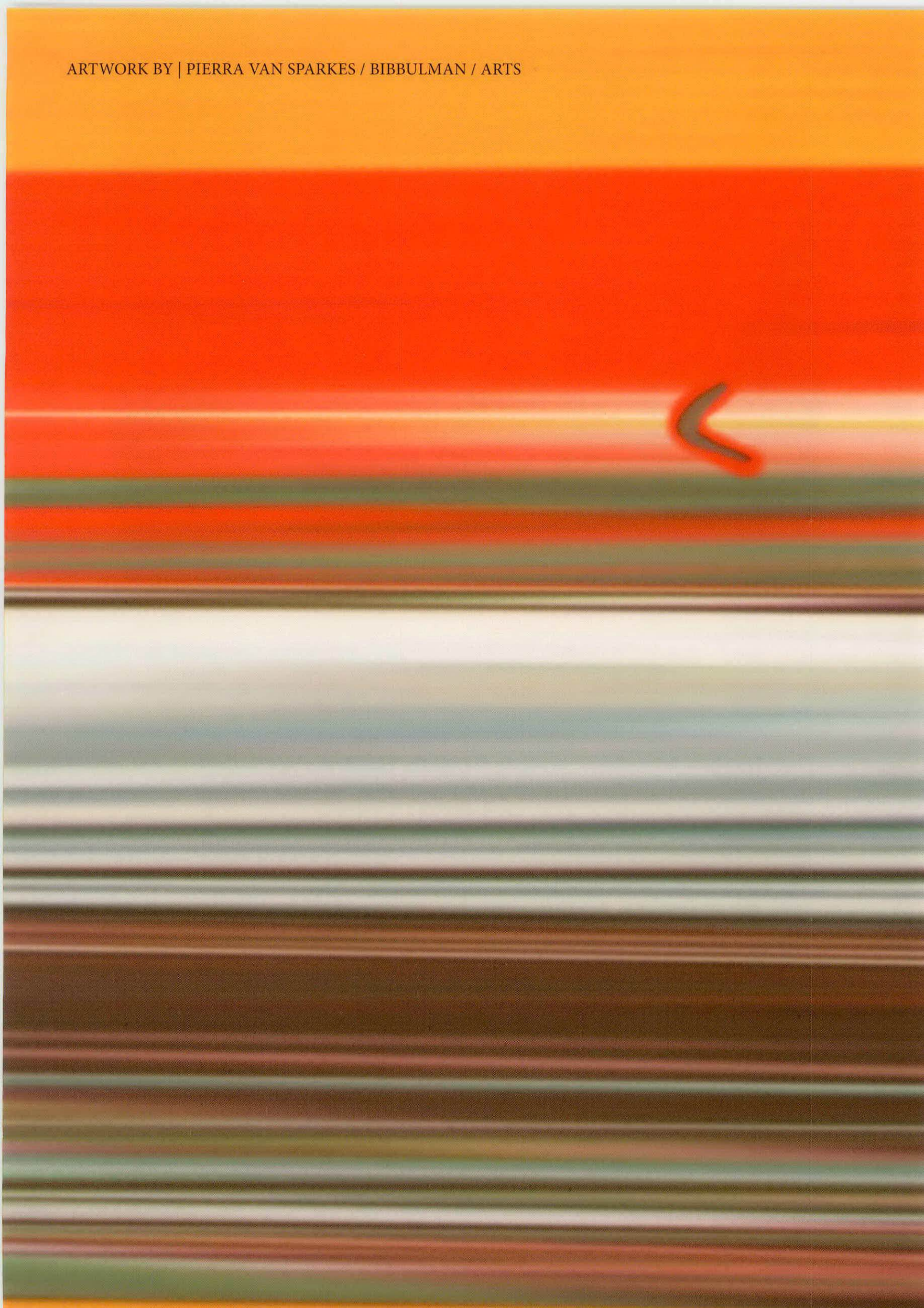
it is possible to find
her waiting by the bank
of your local water
as she needs to drink her fill
I knew a man once
who found her
even touched her skin
who then wept
with the beauty
of something so pure
something so real



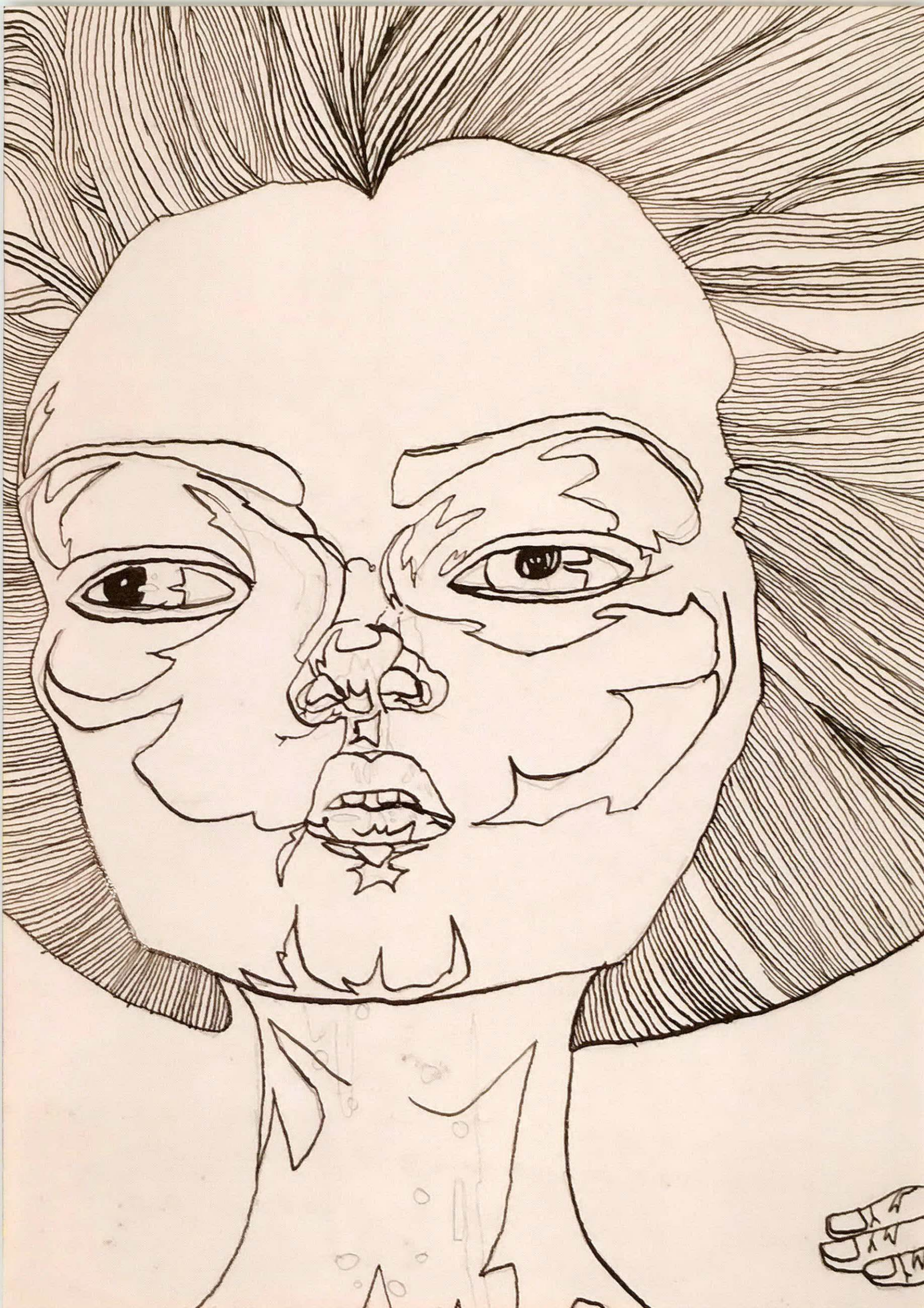




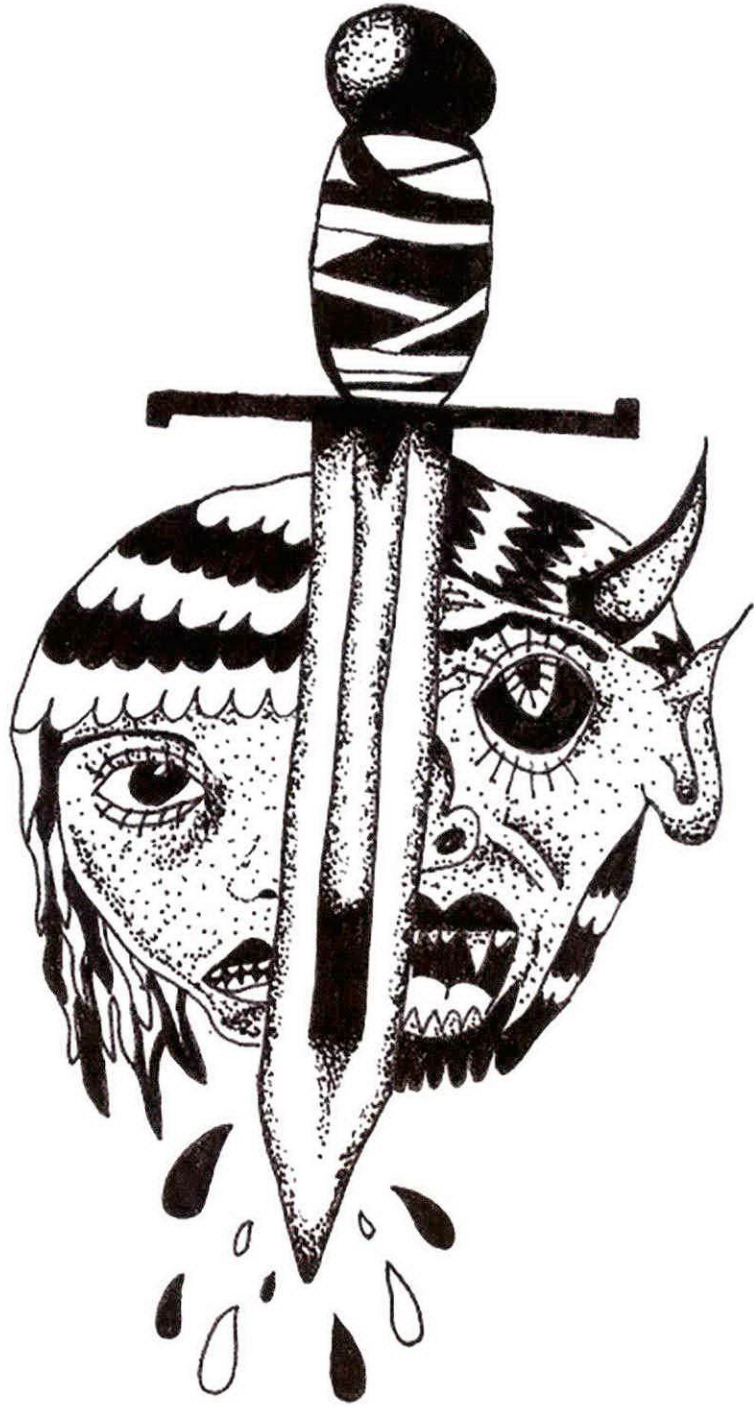
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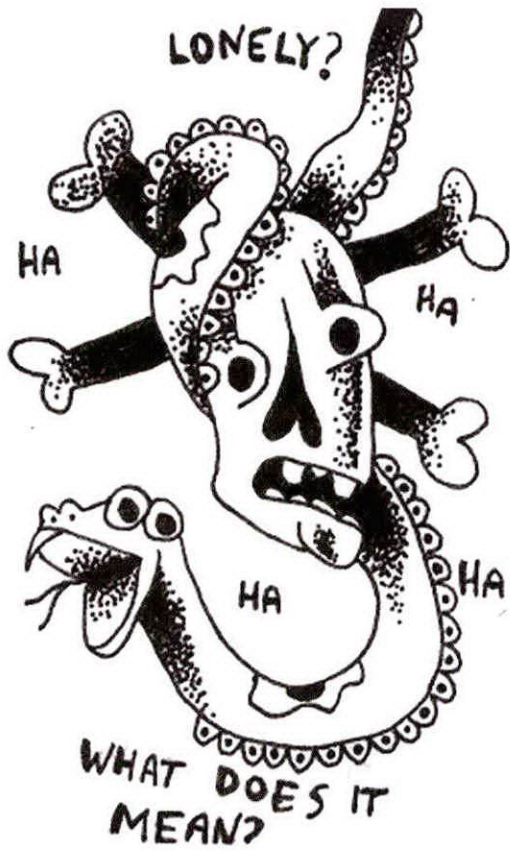
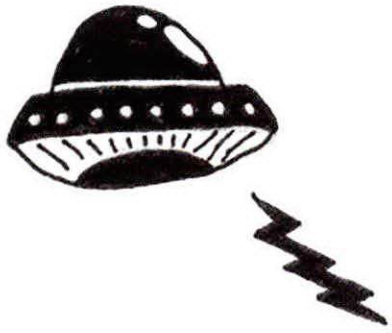


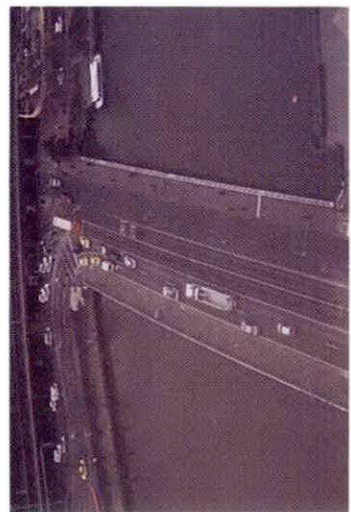
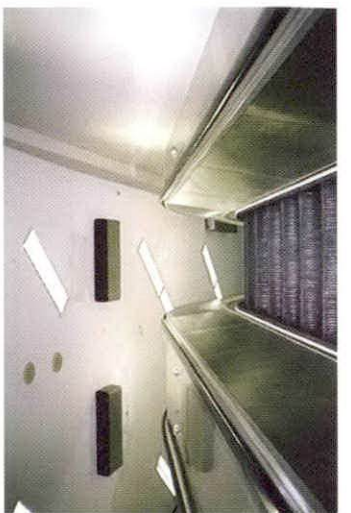
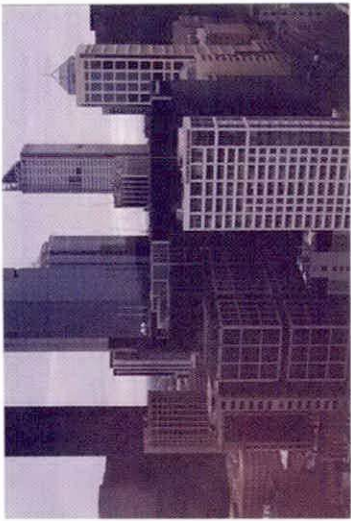
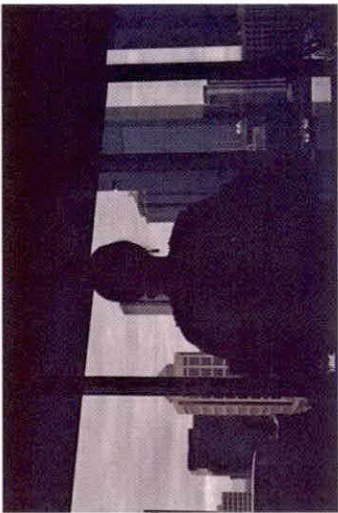
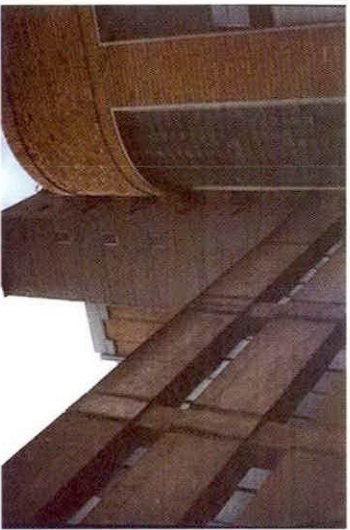


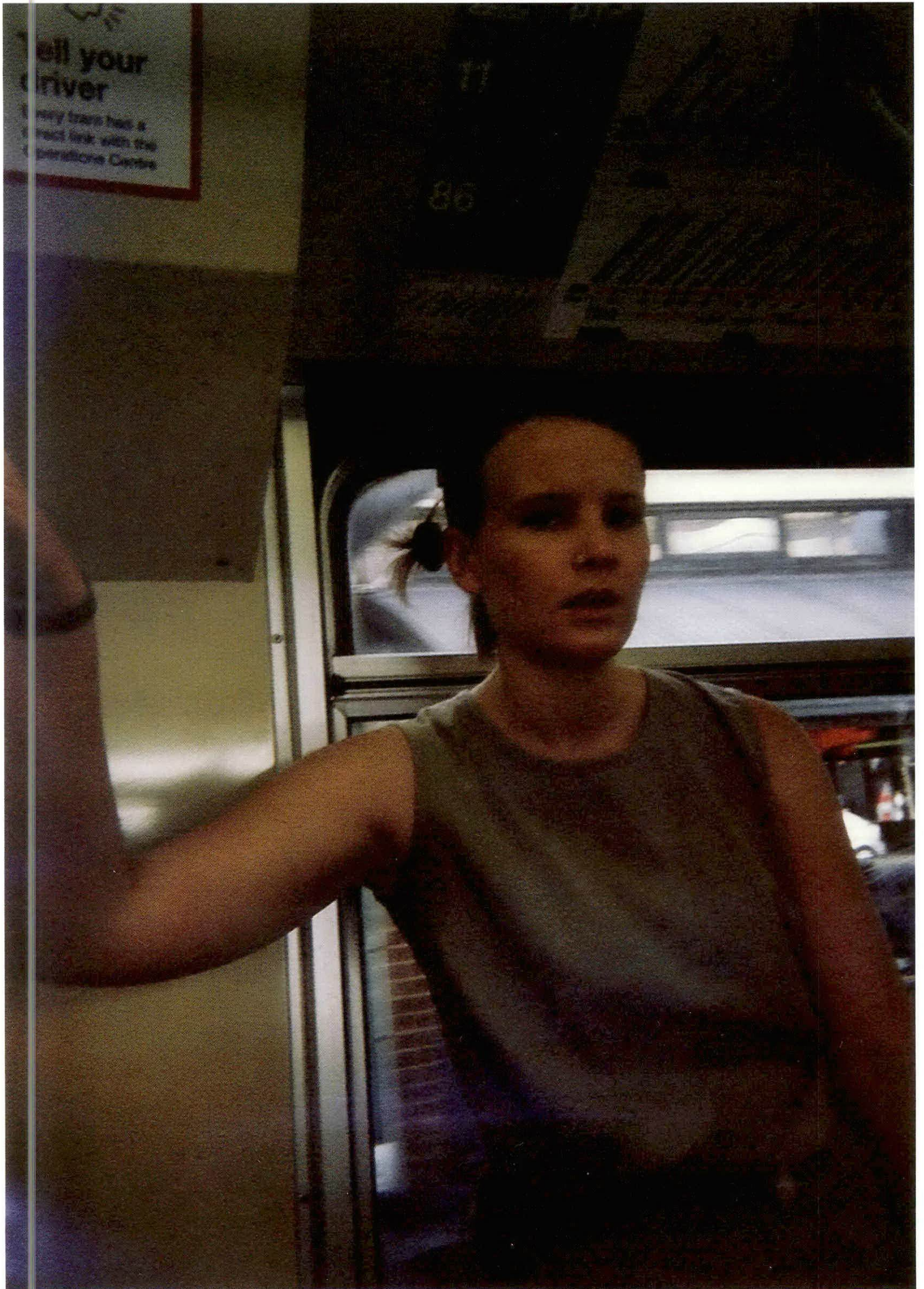












ARTWORK | PIERRA VAN SPARKES / BIBBULMAN / ARTS

LAMENT

GENEVIEVE GRIEVES / WORIMI / ARTIST

This work was inspired by a point in the West Australian landscape I was introduced to by my friend and sister, Dianne Jones. This particular site is in Dianne's Country. A place she and her family are connected to inherently; the place of their Ancestors. But with the coming of the Europeans, Country changed and new experiences and memories were etched into the landscape. In this case, a tragedy unfolded that has waited to be explored.

We were able to visit this place briefly. It is on rich, lush Country deep within a pastoral property - difficult to access and undisturbed. If it were a room, there would be furniture sitting covered in sheets and a layer of dust inches thick; it is almost as if the occupants left some time ago, but their presence remains.

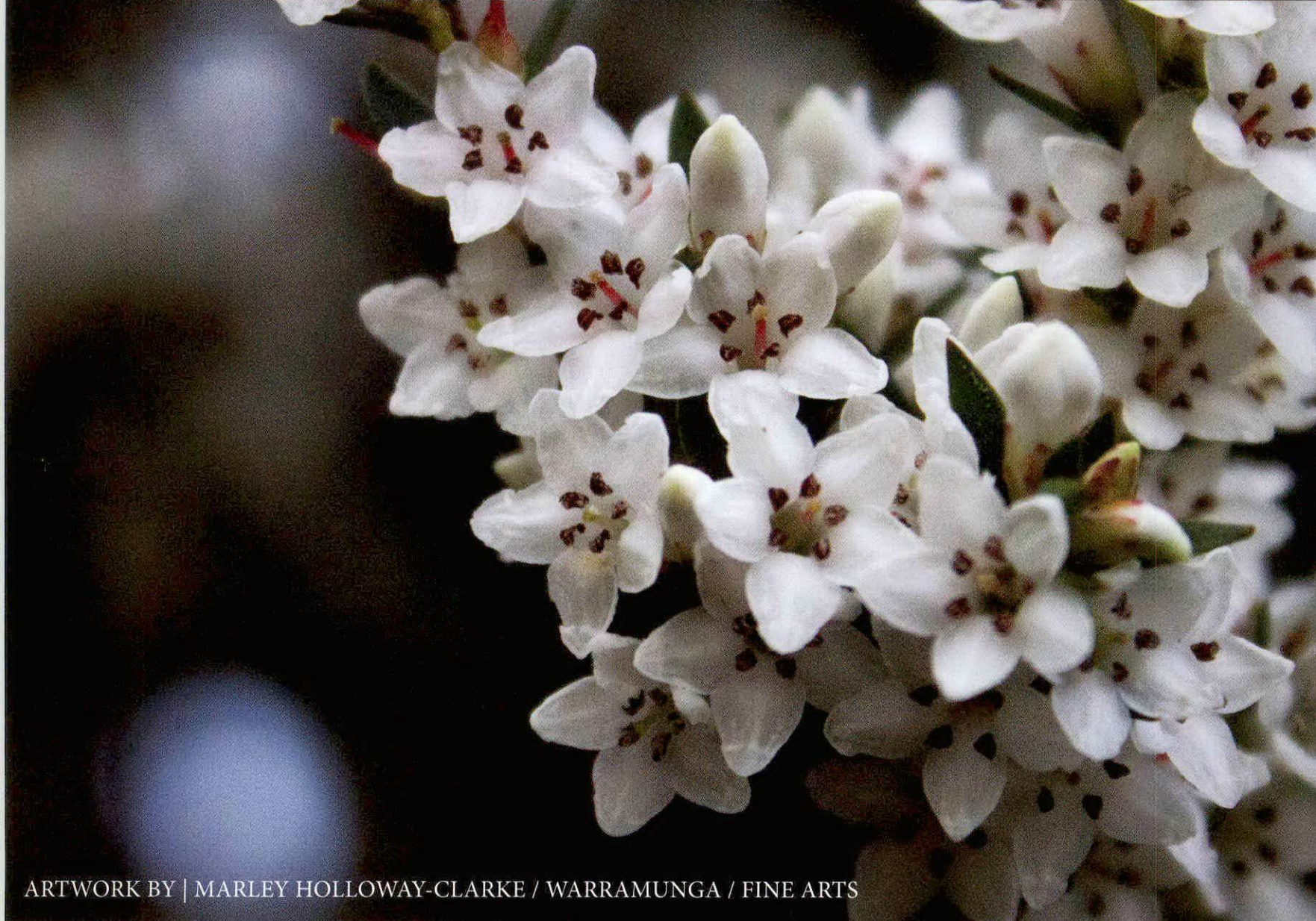
Lament comes from my connection to Dianne, her family, her uncovering of the story of this place and my brief encounter with it. But I am also drawing upon a vast reservoir of shared knowledge and experience, brought forth through connections to my friends and family,

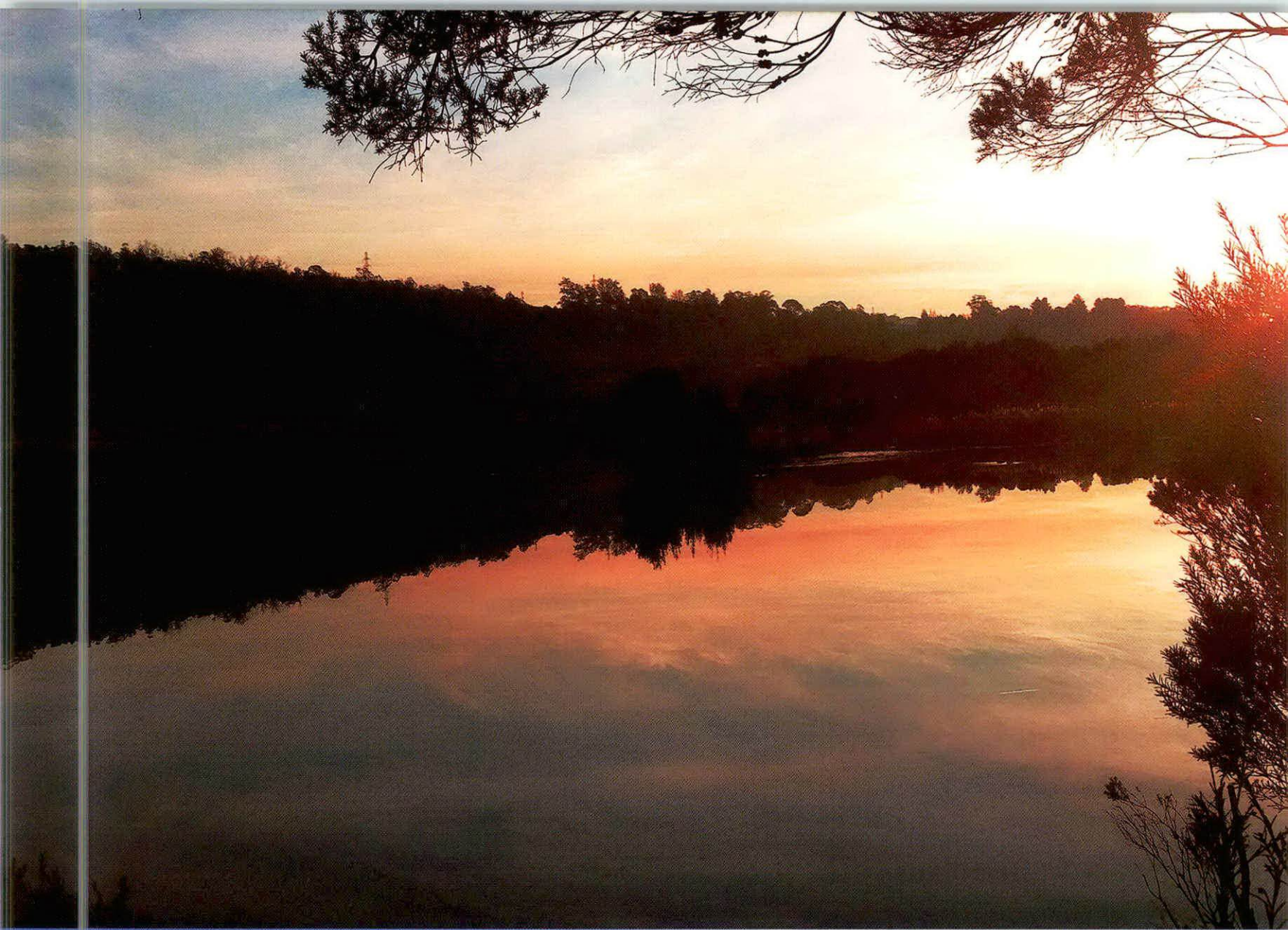
my exploration of this nation's history and to places I have been and felt the presence of these scars in the landscape; sites of tragedy that are usually unmarked and often wilfully forgotten.

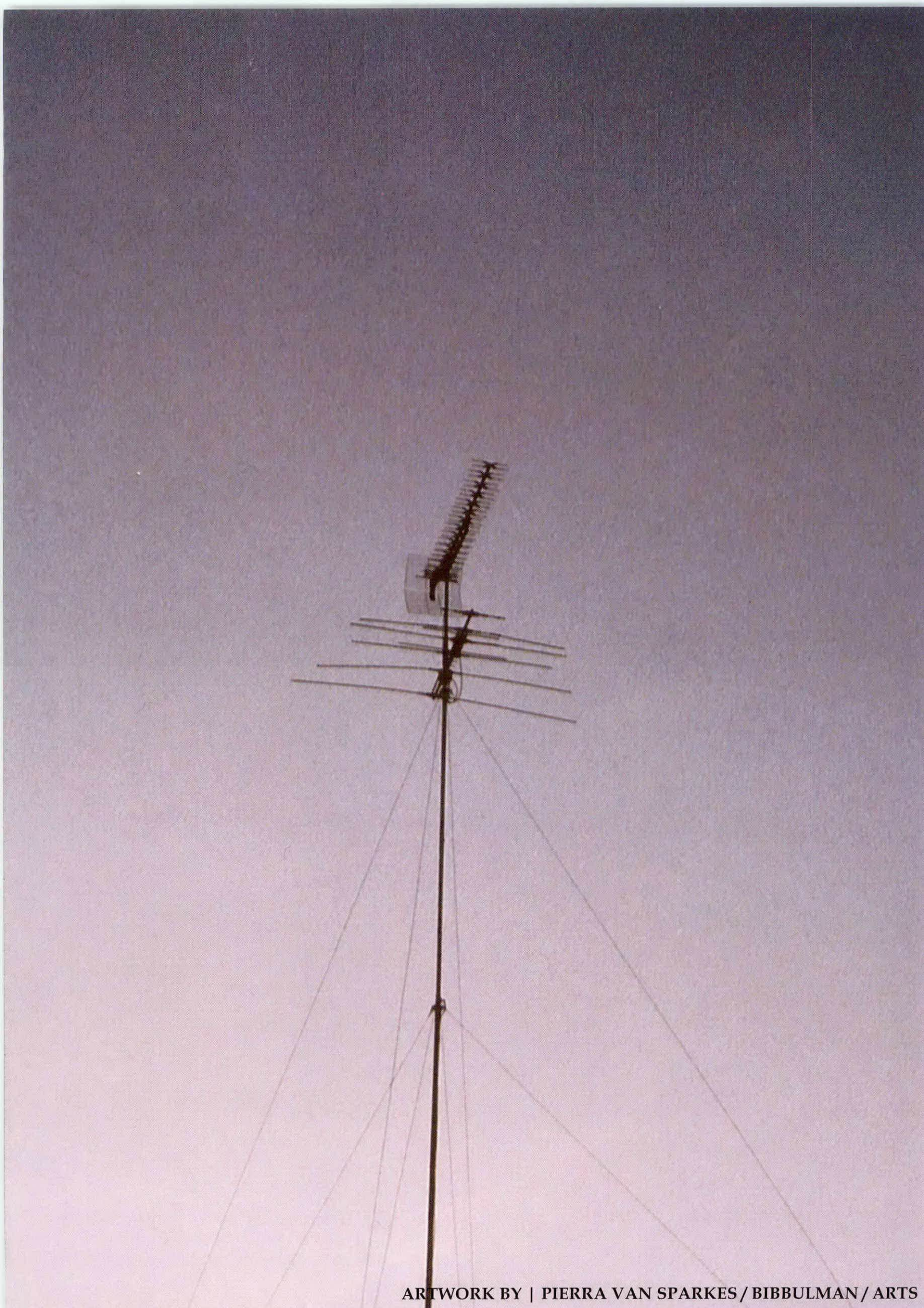
The piece is also very much inspired by the dancer, Yaraan Bundle. Knowing Yaraan - her connection to culture, her beauty and grace as an artist - has been a key element in the development of this work. Yaraan has talked to me about dancing on Country and what this means to her on a spiritual level, and I asked her to dance in one of the oldest colonial buildings in the nation. She held this space with strength and brought her own connections and knowledge to this piece. She dances for the individuals in this story we are reflecting on, but she is also dancing for us all.

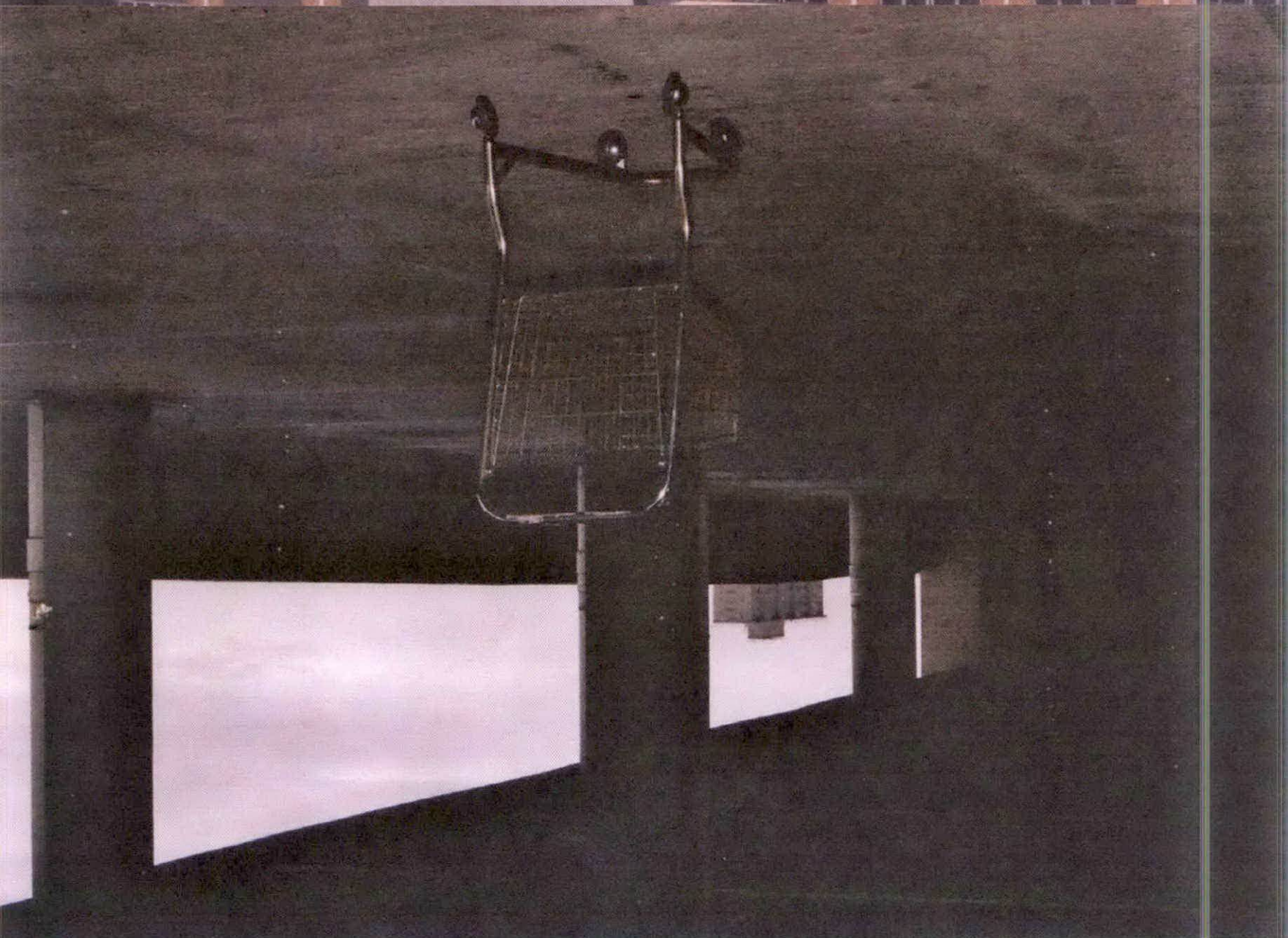
Lament is an act of memorialisation; an act of remembrance. As it is through the recognition of what has gone before, however difficult this journey may be, that we can mourn, heal and find some peace within and between our selves.

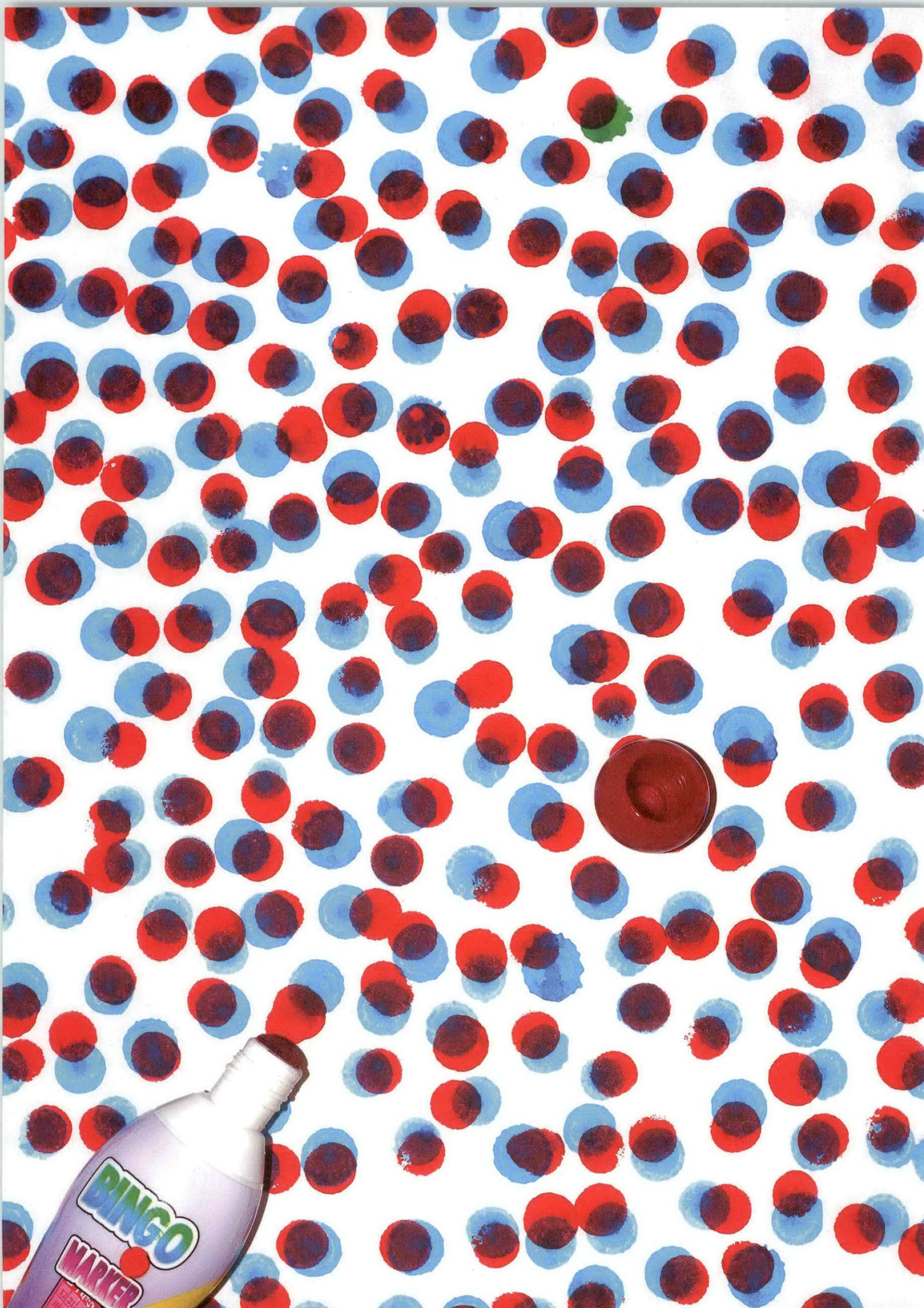












BLACKFULLA

BINGO

" I'VE NEVER MET AN ABORIGINAL BEFORE! "

YOU HAVE UNI IN A BUILDING NAMED AFTER A EUGENICIST

WITH NO INDICATION YOU WOULD, THEY ASK IF YOU KNOW A RANDOM BLACKFULLA...

... AND YOU DO

WHEN THEY WANNA LEARN OUR LANGUAGES, HOW TO THROW A BOOMERANG OR WEAVE BASKETS BUT LEARNING ABOUT THE MYASICH OR OUR CURRENT RATE OF DEATHS IN CUSTODY IS TOO HARD.

A REAL CONVERSATION ABOUT INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RIGHTS IS IMPEDED WHEN THEY CAN'T GET OVER THE FACT WE CAN'T PLAY THE D'IDGE.

" BUT YOU'RE SO WELL SPOKEN?! "

" I THINK MY GREAT GREAT GRANDMOTHER WAS PART ABORIGINAL "

YOU'RE IN A GROUP OF THREE OR MORE BLACKFULLAS AND WADJELAS START GETTING NERVOUS

" IF YOU'RE ABORIGINAL WHY ARE YOU WHITE? "

" YEAH, BUT YOU'RE NOT ABORIGINAL ABORIGINAL, YOU KNOW? "

THEY GIVE YOU THE NERVOUS PURSED LIPS SMILE WHEN YOU WALK PAST



" WOW, I NEVER WOULD HAVE GUESSED! "

THEY TELL YOU ABOUT HOW THEY WENT UP NORTH ONE TIME

SOMEONE QUIZZES YOU ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ABSTUDY AND AUSTUDY

" WHAT PERCENTAGE ABORIGINAL ARE YOU? "

THEY PULL THEIR ARM OUT TO COMPARE THEIR TAN WITH YOURS

WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTED TO PLAY TEACHER AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT SOMEONE HAS SOME 'ABORIGINAL QUESTIONS' THEY NEED ANSWERS TO...

AND WHEN YOU DON'T THEY SAY SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT OF 'HOW DO YOU EVER EXPECT US TO UNDERSTAND YOU THEN?'

WHEN THEY USE THEIR BLAK FRIEND/ COLLEAUGE/POSTIE AS THEIR 'TMNOTARACIST' CREDENTIAL.

AWKWARD MOMENT WHEN SOMEONE INVITES YOU TO AN AUSTRALIA DAY GATHERING

" IF YOU HATE COLINISATION SO MUCH WHY DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH THEN? "

" CHILL OUT, WE SAID SORRY! "

SOMEONE IS CANDIDLY RACIST IN FRONT OF YOU AND HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT THE STORM COMIN FOR THEM.



ARTWORK BY | PIERRA VAN SPARKES / BIBBULMAN / ARTS



COMMENTARY

MINORITY WITHIN THE MINORITY

ALEXANDRA HOHOI / COMET TRIBE MURRAY ISLAND / SCIENCE

Being a Torres Strait Islander living in Victoria can be hard. The air is different, the weather is cold (like actually so cold) and you are a very long way from home. However, in a place of student support like Murrup Barak, in many ways we are not alone; a lot of people are a long way from home and a lot of people miss their country. But inclusion is not always guaranteed in these spaces.

Being Indigenous in an historically white institution like the University of Melbourne isn't easy, even for the city-bound Koories. We study on the same grounds where they once taught the students that we were the missing link between humans and apes, where low expectations still prevail, and where we are less than one percent of the student population.

We almost become numb to the racism that comes from outside our shared space at Murrup Barak, but then to get it from people who are supposed to be our brothers and sisters - that's when it hurts the most.

As an Indigenous student the truth is you begin to expect the subtle racism; subconsciously attributing it to ignorance (how could the privileged white person, or the immigrant, know what they mean when they say things like "Captain Cook 'discovered' Australia"?). We rely on the Indigenous Support Centre to protect us, or at least to provide a safe space, ignorance and racism free; but for Torres Strait Islanders these centres have not always provided that.

Torres Strait Islander people are still largely underrepresented in institutions such as universities. While Indigenous people make up three percent of the Australian population, Torres Strait Islanders make up only six percent of that. We are the minority within the minority. And in a university so far from our water it is easy to understand why the general population don't really know who we are. We almost become numb to the racism that comes from outside our shared space at Murrup Barak, but then to get it from people who are supposed to

be our brothers and sisters - that's when it hurts the most.

The discourse used to describe our similar history can be very exclusive, both in text and in conversation. While each community has their own stories, we suffer together in our mutual history of pain and dispossession; a history that today unites us. But it is hard to feel united when, even in an institution of education, we are left out of the story. That's why using collective terms are so crucial in a mixed community like Murrup Barak. It is important to remember that "Aboriginal" is not a collective term, and that Red, Black and Yellow are not Torres Strait Islander colours.

Not having our flag on anything that is aimed at both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is unacceptable. And expecting us to "get over it" or "just go with it" is not okay either. While I can't speak on behalf of every Torres Strait Islander, I can assure you that I do not identify at all with the Aboriginal flag. Asking me to identify that way, it is just as insulting as asking me to be Australian rather than Indigenous Australian. What you don't realise is that when you fail to hang our flag aside yours, you stand with the white people in denying our history.

I will always respect that I am on Aboriginal country while I am here on the mainland. I don't feel connection to this country, but I do feel connection to the people and I do expect to be respected and acknowledged as a Torres Strait Islander.

TICKING THE BOX

ELLEN PETTY / JINGLI / WARAMUNGA / ARTS

As hard as this is to admit, I have to be honest and say that apart from the first few introductory meetings, I avoided Murrup Barak my first two years here.

When I would get emails or text messages for events and lunches, I would consider attending for a second, but then would quickly talk myself out of it. It wasn't because the staff weren't friendly and supportive. It wasn't because I was unaware of the services available. It wasn't even because I didn't know if my student card would swipe me in the computer lab or not (it does). It was because I didn't know how to respond to invitations into a space, that up until few years beforehand, I realised I could now occupy.

For as long as I can remember, my Nana has been obsessed with family history and genealogy. Many times she would try to sit us down and explain new discoveries she had found about our ancestors and attempt to encourage the same level of eagerness in each of her many, many grandchildren. However, much to her disappointment, we were not as enthusiastic.

Just before I moved overseas, Nana and some of our other family moved from Melbourne up to Canberra. I vaguely recall her mentioning that we had Aboriginal ancestry a couple of times growing up- but as horrible as it sounds- none of us paid much attention to her genealogical findings. Half the time it just sounded like we were part of every nationality under the sun. It wasn't until I was living on the other side of the world, that Nana was able to reconnect with other fam-

ily in Canberra from the Northern Territory that had some of the missing links and other answers to our Indigenous Australian line.

The aunties, uncles and cousins that had moved up there with her, were able to experience the events and connections that confirmed this part of our family together. My cousins started getting involved in the Indigenous programs offered in their respective schools. My aunty became a key figure in Indigenous education projects for young people. My other cousins participated in all the Indigenous sports tournaments and teams offered in their areas. By the time I had moved back to Australia, instead of dismissing Nana's claim that she did in fact have an Aboriginal grandmother, it was now accepted as though we had known all along.

After being home for a couple of months, I started applying for jobs and sorted out which university I needed to enrol into. I was then presented with a question that I had seen hundreds of times before;

'Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander decent?'

For the first few applications, I ticked the box I had always picked before- 'No'. But after a while, I felt so uneasy and unsure about how to answer that seemingly simple question. I mean, if the question had asked; 'Are you of Canadian decent?', I would have no hesitation in saying yes. If the question had asked; 'Are you of Maori and Hawaiian decent?', again, there would be zero reluctance (although those questions aren't typically followed-up

with a request to 'prove' these claims in writing). But this question became something I struggled over answering more than any other in each application in which it appeared.

Finally, I asked my Nana and aunty to explain the entire situation to me. Why we never talked about it properly before, what happened while I had been living overseas and what I should do and say in response to this question. After many discussions, my own research and fact-checking and personal deliberation, I felt like I could tick the 'yes' box.

However, upon being accepted into the Uni-

want to deny what is truly part of my family and identity. It wasn't until after accepting my positionality as an Australian born Maori-Canadian with a recently re-discovered Aboriginal Australian heritage, that I found I could breathe a little easier. It also helped that a couple of stellar Indigenous kids reached out to me, encouraged me to give Murrup Barak another crack and made me feel like my particular Aboriginality had a place.

I don't know if any of you have had a similar experience to mine or are currently experiencing it, but one thing I do know, is that all of us are at different points in our understand-

After a while, I felt so uneasy and unsure about how to answer that seemingly simple question :
'Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander decent?'

versity of Melbourne and obtaining a solid job alongside it, the invitations to get involved in the Indigenous Australian groups and projects in these organisations then continued. I may have ticked the 'yes' box on paper, but obviously was still nowhere near a real and confident answer for myself. I managed to avoid further invites, and after little a while, dismissed it all from my mind.

One semester I found I had picked a lot of subjects that are part of the Australian Indigenous Studies major. As you can imagine, participating in tutorials and writing my essays from a clear position was extremely difficult. I have never wanted to claim to be something that I'm not, however I would never

ing of what our Aboriginality means to us. Some have been born and raised with a clear knowledge of their Indigenous Australian culture, family and heritage. Others won't ever have that same level of access to culture, language or community. The 'ticking the box' problematic may not affect others as it did me, but regardless, ticking 'yes' can mean finding a place or making space for different definitions and understandings of Aboriginality, no matter how varied they may be.

WHY YOU NEED TO VOTE

ZAC COLLINS-WIDDERS / ANAIWAN / ARTS

On the 8th of May, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's request for a double dissolution was approved by the Governor General. With an eight-week marathon election campaign now underway, media outlets will begin smearing their least favourite politicians and we will be bombarded with ABC Fact Checks and Murdoch owned news-polls. But nowhere will Channel 7, 9, KIIS FM or The Australian, be urging anyone to enrol to vote. Why is this? When voting is perhaps our most powerful tool we are able to use as citizens of a free and liberal democracy, why would no one be encouraging us to enrol to vote? Because they don't want you to, and that's exactly why you need to! I won't try to explain why private media corporations have such vested interest in creating and maintaining voter apathy because that's another story in itself. But I'm here to tell you why you need to goddamn enrol to vote for this Federal election!

I have heard every excuse/reason as to why young people do not enrol to vote / do not vote at all and they're all baseless, and nothing grinds my gears more than arguments based off no evidence. So I am going to expose why your excuses/reasons as to why you should not vote are petty and negligent.

VOTER APATHY - "I'm not interested in politics"

When I was younger I had absolutely no interest in politics whatsoever, it was too confusing to understand, the newspapers were hard to read and I wasn't very interested in watching old men fool around on camera (... or was I?). That was until I asked myself the

question 'why can I not get married to another man in this country?'. How is it possible that the government even gets to control who gets married and who cannot? Why am I not considered equal to my heterosexual friends? The whole of Australia did not vote for straight couples to get married, so why would a same-sex couple getting married, concern the entire Australian population? It was at that moment that I came to realise that these old men yelling at each other in some green chamber in Canberra were directly affecting my life, my right to get married and that I definitely had a vested interest in what they had to say.

The decisions politicians make in Parliament directly affect not only your life, and the lives of people around you, but also the lives of future generations. Having no interest in politics is absolute bullshit and I think you all know it! It's not only lazy but it's also dangerous. By not taking the social responsibility to learn about politics and act in the best interests of yourself, the people around you, future generations and the ecosystem you are literally endangering all of the above.

FAILED SYSTEM - "I don't vote because the system doesn't work in our favour anyway"

Western countries are viewed as the most morally, technologically and economically advanced countries in the world.

We have freedoms, liberty and human rights and our system of representative democracy is why our country is able to have these core liberal values... well, sup-

posedly. I totally agree that our “democracy” does not function well; we still end up with unpopular parties in power and Prime Ministers who do not share our beliefs and somehow we are always left discontent with whoever is in charge. So how do we change that?

Well, famous actor/comedian/author/activist Russell Brand shares this dissatisfaction with the system we currently have in place, but advocates a very different view- which I am going to dispute. Brand claims that by participating in a system (which only serves the interests of the few ruling elite) we are showing our complacency with

ly working towards implementing an alternate system.

Now some might say, why not participate but just donkey-vote?

Here are some quick points to debunk any myths behind why donkey-voting is a good way to send a message:

- Donkey votes are not protesting, they’re just ridiculous
- Informal votes are not sending a message. No one is going to know what that message is because your vote is simply thrown onto an informal pile- the AEC isn’t going to read your angrily scribbled manifesto on the ballot paper. You’re just giving

When voting is perhaps our most powerful tool we are able to use as citizens of a free and liberal democracy, why would no one be encouraging us to enrol to vote?

the system thereby validating it. Russell Brand is a strong advocate of mass (non-violent) civil disobedience and one of the best ways to do so is to quietly refuse to participate in the system, i.e. to not vote. Instead we should look for alternative systems, which will serve the interests of the people and the planet, and could only be overcome through a revolution- but revolution can only materialise with collective power. Unless every single Australian voter decided not to vote, the power of the vote is only transferred to the people who did actually vote. And while I don’t agree that change from within the system is the most effective, it is the most effective tool we have right now to show our discontent with the system and to perhaps elect governments that actually represent us. Instead of idly sitting around, waiting for a revolution to happen, we should be using the tools we currently have to our advantage whilst simultaneous-

away your power to the people who actually did vote properly.

- Your non-vote could be one of the ones that make a difference, so why not use it effectively, rather than letting others’ intentions determine its significance?
- Voting is an absolute first-world privilege (this saying is beaten to death but it is absolutely true in this instance). Thousands of people are fighting and dying for the right that you get- the right to have a say in who will govern their nation so voting is your responsibility

Another point is that unlike the UK (Russell Brand’s nation place), voting in Australia is compulsory and you will be fined if you do not vote (once you are enrolled to vote). In order to not give others the power to make decisions for you and let your voice be heard, you must enrol to vote! And while you may never find a party or independent

that shares all the same principles and values as you, you can find the ones that almost do. Just look at each party's policies and determine which ones you feel are most aligned with your own. Which leads me to my next point- "the two-party system".

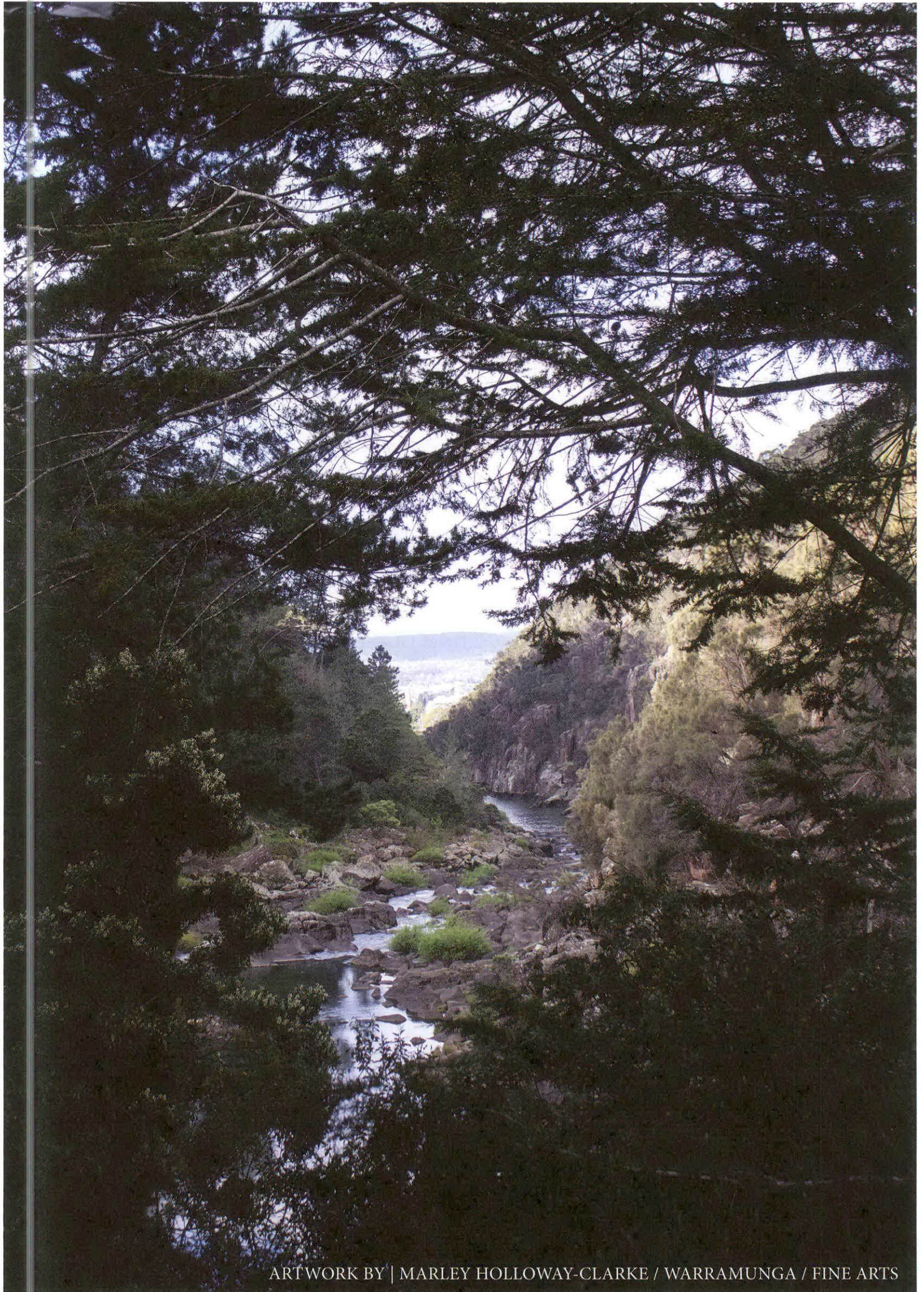
TWO-PARTY SYSTEM - "It's a matter of voting for the lesser of two evils"

This argument is self-perpetuating; by accepting the fact that there are only two options available (which is blatantly wrong given that there are 57 parties enrolled as of Tuesday, the 17th of May) you only continue to limit yourself to voting for the "lesser of two evils". This theory of having only two (at best three) options is maintained throughout media discourse and discourages voters from choosing third party or independent candidates.

So do not be discouraged to vote for smaller parties because the power literally lies in our hands... If you want smaller parties to be voted in, then vote for them. Do not throw it away to a 'bigger party' because then you will be wasting your vote. Just as mentioned before, collective power works best and if everyone voted for the smaller parties then those parties would win!

In conclusion, you should have no more doubts, excuses or reasons as to why you should not vote and I suggest that you immediately go and enrol to vote so that you can take responsibility for your future and take back control of your life!

And remember, if you don't vote, then you don't get to complain.



ARTWORK BY | MARLEY HOLLOWAY-CLARKE / WARRAMUNGA / FINE ARTS

CULTURE AND THE INSTAGRAM AGE

CARISSA LEE/ WEMBA WEMBA /MASTERS OF FINE ARTS

Before we moved to Melbourne, for a lovely little date night idea, my partner and I decided to attend the OZASIA Moon Lantern Festival in our hometown on Adelaide, which was going to be a little special this year, as there would be more food stalls and a noodle stall section, as well as roving performers and cute stalls selling lanterns of your own.

Apparently the Festival in the past has had about 15,000 patrons arrive in the past, and so was prepared for about that many this year.

Instead, 50,000 people rocked up to this

wasn't until I was surrounded with a constant clicking and flashing and filtering mob, did I realise just how bad we'd become.

We finally made it to our intended little picnic spot, and found a lovely patch of grass near the bridge a way up from the river so we'd be able to see both the lanterns and the fireworks. The night ran a little behind schedule, as the poor organisers were faced with a bit of a logistical nightmare having to navigate through a much larger mass of people than expected, so much so, that one of the lanterns had to be disassembled on

Now I am one with my generation, the shutter-bug, overshare, doing-it-for-the-likes kind of era that we find ourselves in, but it wasn't until I was surrounded with a constant clicking and flashing and filtering mob, did I realise just how bad we'd become.

thing, and we were completely shoulder-to-shoulder with a constant epic crowd, and decided it was taking us too long to get from food to where we wanted to be (the other goddamned side of the river by this stage!), and so we ended up going across the road to the servo to get some chips and water to tide us over during the night.

We made our way to the other, less crowded side of the river. But every so often we were having to move around people just standing in the middle of the path, next to the river, in amongst the dense fuck-ton of a mosh pit, and do you know what most of them were doing? Taking fucking photos.

Now I am one with my generation, the shutter-bug, overshare, doing-it-for-the-likes kind of era that we find ourselves in, but it

the bridge instead of woven throughout the crowd along with the others.

It got dark, and it was a little colder than expected, but the evening was about to kick off, and they gathered the lanterns into the centre lookout by the new stadium. The people on our side of the river bank couldn't bloody wait, though. A massive bunch of people, politely stepped over those of us who sat and snuggled up for the cold night, and although the lanterns weren't due to leave for quite some time, everyone was scrambling up the hill, over kids by the railing, just to get that first picture. Thankfully one of the great things about the event running behind schedule, was that there was a decent amount of time for these shutterbugs to get over the excitement, upload

their precious pics, and sit like the rest of us. However when the Festival did eventually begin, gorgeous music erupting from the speakers, and the lantern carriers began their path along the Torrens Rivers' bridge; sure enough, every keen onlooker was back on their feet again for happy snaps.

However the sense of urgency, this bizarre, irrational fear of missing out, was emphasised as all the more unnecessary and ridiculous by the slow nature of the spectacle before us. People scrambling to their feet, bolting to the best viewpoint, to capture a snail-paced march across the bridge, and eventually through the large crowd across the water. This occasion was great. It was

Once the main show came to an end, the night concluded with a fireworks show off the bridge. And yes, everyone took pictures, and everyone filmed it. But I just sat there cuddled into the back of my better half, mostly for warmth, and watched the light show, and smelt the smoke that comes from them, and smiled at the reaction of the children around us, and worried about the swans in the water and the dogs nearby who might not have appreciated the racket. All fifty thousand of us then walked back through the city, down the road the police were kind enough to block off for us. And there were parents carrying their kids' lanterns, and some parents carrying sleepy kids, partners huddling up in warmth as

Remember to just sit and let something happen without this incessant need to capture and lock up every nanosecond like it's a prisoner.

ploddy, but that's how it is supposed to be. In this visual, consuming era of as soon as possible, now, twenty minutes ago; being delivered with filters, loud music, an assault of oversaturated colours and oversharing, we have forgotten how to sit. Listen. Look at the lanterns someone spent hours making and is now lugging the damned thing around, wading through tens of thousands of expectant, impatient patrons.

We watched the glowing, beautiful lanterns floating through the dark sea of moving bodies across from us. I wondered just how many of them were littered with mixed feelings that come with being the generation of the unsettled, the constant need for something to just happen already, and those nostalgic of a time of privacy and enjoyment were a little maudlin at how no one want to look at the pretty lights anymore.

we were, and friends chattering about the experience and marvelling at the amount of people emerging from the event. This is why we go, not to report and document for the people who aren't there, but for the people who are. The thing that you're actually wanting to experience. I hope that everyone has a chance to see festivals and events with this in mind, with experiences in mind, there are cultures and stories, and experiences that you may be unknown to you, you may know a lot, you might just want to indulge in a bit of diverse viewing for a second. Remember to just sit and let something happen without this incessant need to capture and lock up every nanosecond like it's a prisoner.

ABORIGINAL VOICES IN ONLINE SPACES

YARRAMUN CONOLE/ BARDA /NARMA / KABALBARA / ARTS

On the importance of online spaces for young Black people, being a young Black woman and finding community.

Being a young Black woman on the internet has been an interesting experience to say the least. I've learned a lot and grateful for how far I've come. But putting myself out there for everyone to see has opened me up to a lot of things that now make me very aware of how visible in society I am as an Aboriginal woman. My writing and presence online has kept me motivated though to fight for my people and to speak up even when I know my voice will be met with anger and with people not wanting to understand where I'm coming from.

What drew me to the internet in the first place was the allure of being able to define myself on my terms and create a space for myself and other Indigenous peoples that could be entirely our own. It's very rare that we find autonomous spaces completely separate from private and government interests.

Writing up content for the blog in the beginning was fairly laid back. Though I eventually came to understand that it takes quite a lot of effort to keep the blog running and to keep my content relevant. I also learned that people definitely aren't afraid of swinging into full blown harassment and abuse online. Every time I post something "controversial", my inbox is immediately filled with vile and abusive messages. This creates a lot of anxiety for me, and I think it's the reason why I, at some points, don't post on

the blog for weeks on end. I've gradually learned to just deal with this and ignore the abuse, because sometimes it's just better for my mental health to not engage with people who do not see or recognise my humanity.

Before 'black-australia', I didn't experience community for quite some time and this was one of the key reasons why I set up the blog. Now that I've left home to live and study at college at the privileged, prestigious, white and overwhelming University of Melbourne, being able to connect with mob online is invaluable. It has removed the barriers of land and oceans between and brought so many important people into my life whose presence and influence I am ever so grateful for.

In addition to that, blogging has solidified in me how important it is to connect with other of colour communities around the world. Knowing there's Black/Indigenous/other PoC all around the world who experience the same pain I do is a relief. Through understanding our common struggles we can stand in solidarity with each other. In saying that, I have witnessed how prevalent colorism and anti-Blackness is in non-Black PoC communities, and I'm always eager to call that out. If we're going to talk about solidarity and our joint movements for justice and liberation, it can't be conditional. We need to be intersectional and inclusive in our activism.

Whilst on this journey, I've also explored the world of feminism and have ultimately found my footing as a Black intersectional

feminist. Intersectional feminism has given me the tools to describe my experiences as an Aboriginal woman. I always knew I was treated and perceived differently because of my Aboriginality and being a woman. I look up to women like Nakkiah Lui, Amy McQuire and Celeste Liddle who are such strong Black voices on social media on Aboriginal feminism and who are leading the conversation on institutionalised racism in Australian society. We need more strong women like them to be heard and to be given the chance to have their say, because I don't know where I, or other young Aboriginal women, would be if we didn't have

gain. It can be frightening putting yourself out there, but in doing so you are making your important voice heard. You're also being a voice for others who mightn't have the courage to speak up for themselves.

The more my blog allows me to connect with and encourage amazing young Indigenous people, the more I realise how much we needed and were missing this space.

I'd also like to lastly give a few shout outs to young Indigenous peoples and other People of Colour doing interesting things online.

What drew me to the internet in the first place was the allure of being able to define myself on my terms and create a space for myself and other Indigenous peoples that could be entirely our own.

them to look up to.

As young Indigenous people, we've never had many opportunities to express ourselves online and be who we are unapologetically. I see young fellas around me struggling so much, and that inspires me to keep a look out for them. If we don't look after our own, then who will? Online, I can give them the space to be themselves, speak their own truths and be unapologetically Black and proud. I hope I've inspired a sense of community within other young people as well.

I say to any young fella who wants to put their name and voice out there, do it! There's nothing to lose, and everything to

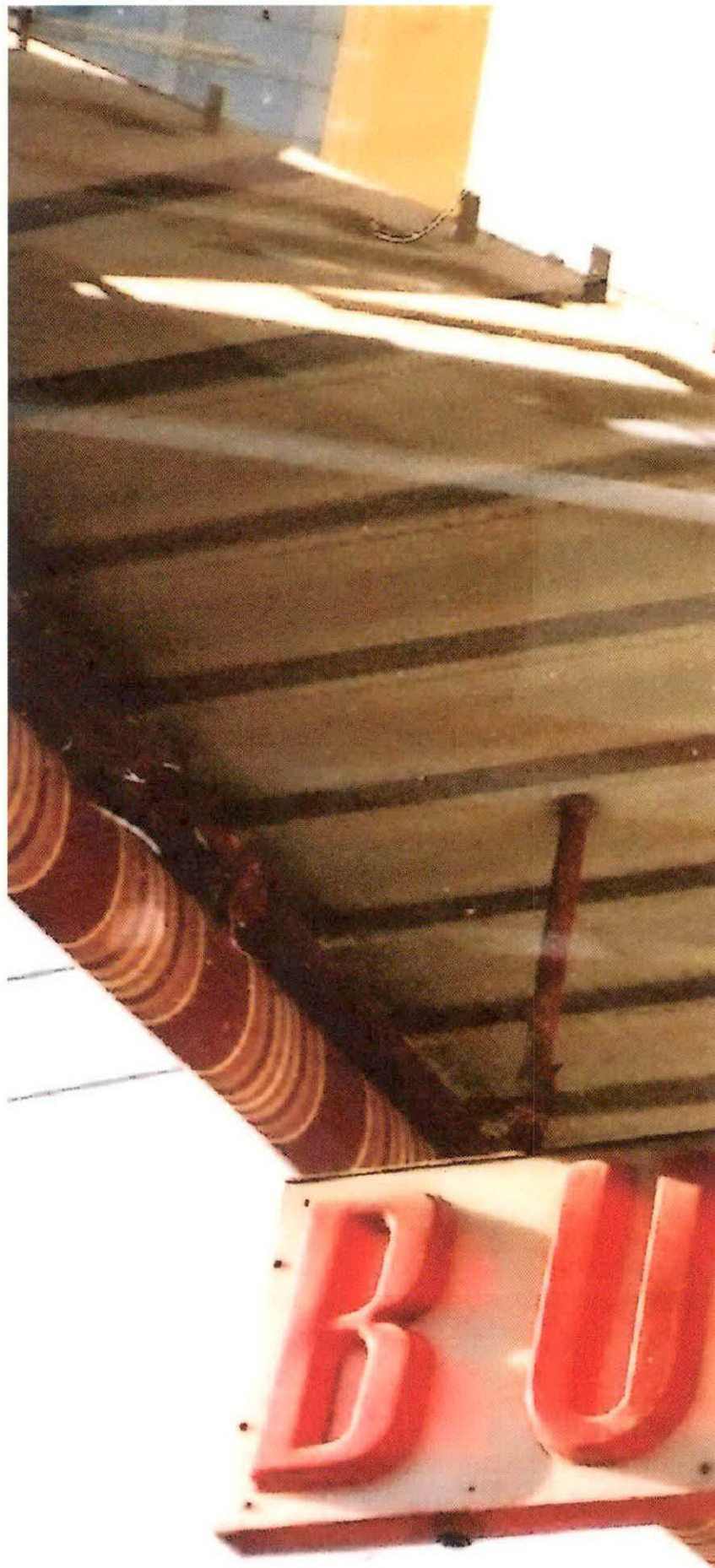
My first shout-out goes to Sovereign Trax. Produced by Wiradjuri woman Hannah Donnelly, Sovereign Trax "curates a monthly playlist of the maddest music from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists around 'Australia'". There are some deadly artists on these playlists and it makes me so happy to see Indigenous peoples receiving the recognition they deserve for their work. Continuing on from their webpage... "Sovereign Trax is an subversive online space that encourages the consumption of our own music in an environment that speaks to our collective stories, identities and resistance." What more could you want?! Check them out here on their SoundCloud page; <https://soundcloud.com/sovereigntrax>

Next up is a shout out to my good friend Mikael. He is a passionate photographer and aims to elevate the voices of marginalised communities through his photography. He is currently pursuing a project titled Limit(less), the project “explores how LGBTQ African immigrants navigate their identities and find ways to overcome the supposed “tension” between their LGBTQ and African identities. The project seeks to visually deconstruct the colonial binary which states that one cannot be both LGBTQ and African by exploring how LGBTQ Africans in diaspora assert their African identities with their style.” Check out his work on his webpages here: <http://limitlessafricans.com/> & <http://owning-my-truth.com/>

I'd love to also mention my lovely friend Somayra Ismailjee. She is a writer, an activist and a visual artist. She's such a passionate person and I'm constantly in awe of her writing, her perseverance and the things she's doing online. Google her right now!

We are the ones who are already leading the fight for justice. We are standing up for our people. There's so many young mob out there doing amazing, revolutionary and inspiring things. We're already making our mark in this world and expressing ourselves online is an avenue to having our voices heard and to defining ourselves on our own terms.

It's our time to shine, so let's reach for the stars and show the world what we we've got.





ARTWORK BY | PIERRA VAN SPARKES / BIBBULMAN / ARTS

NATIONAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

CAMERON MCBROOM/WONGAIN/YAMATJI/COMMERCE

In today's globally-connected world, it's hard not to become just another person in the crowd. To avoid becoming lost in this sea of people, we gather in groups of those with whom we identify. Identity groups are numerous and one rarely identifies, or is identified, in only one or two groups. Your identity can be defined by your race, nationality, language, culture, gender, sexuality, interests, political leaning and the list goes on. Every person, whether they realise it or not, identifies with groups whose members they can relate to and feel comfortable around. Conversations around Australia's multiculturalism have been widely pursued,

'Australia Day', is a day that promotes national pride on a date that essentially glorifies when the British claimed terra nullius and planted their flag in sovereign soil. This is the day that we are encouraged to celebrate our nation on, instead of its day of federation, like every other country in the world. To appropriately convey national pride on this day, one must mispronounce our country's name and incorporate profanity in this self-identification process. "Straya c••t" is a demonstration of the misleading and demeaning national identity that coincidentally goes hand-in-hand with the Australian flag but is not representative of all of

If Australia continues down this path of non-inclusive identification, the division of cultural identity will lead to conflict and the national identity will continue to be tarnished with the nation's past atrocities.

but very rarely do we explore the concept of 'Australian identity'. In general, does Australia have an identity? Moreover, do Aboriginal people fit or feel that they can belong to this identity?

When one sits and reflects on their identity as a 'typical Australian', thoughts of Anglo-saxon, caucasian, and hetero-normativity usually come to mind. The identifying items that flow on from these ideas are barbecues, beaches, thongs, and anything emblazoned with the southern cross and union jack. Typically, Australians are portrayed as friendly, easy-going, and relaxed; however they are simultaneously, alcoholic, racist, and violent. All of these aspects are widely accepted and simply shrugged off as a part of our society, and therefore, contribute to the fabric of the Australian identity.

Australia. However, when a group of people choose to fly a flag different to the one recognised as our national emblem, consequently identifying as some other than 'Australian', conflict nevertheless ensues.

Australia day, Invasion day, and Survival day all share the same date, January 26th. This day is when the linchpin of both the Australian and Aboriginal identities is pulled away and we are able to truly see the differences of these two identities. Invasion, or Survival day, is a day of mourning for Aboriginal people as it marks the day that genocide and colonisation would begin and continue to this day. What followed this date were days of massacres, death, poverty, stolen children, grief, loss and cultural genocide. It is not a day of celebration as those who identify as Australian believe, but one of reflection and remembrance of that

which is a part of the Aboriginal identity. This identity is filled with native language, kinships, connection and harmony with the land, and strong spiritual beliefs. While Australian and Aboriginal identities do share some similarities in regards to their friendly and easy-going nature, they also share some of the negatives, including alcoholism and violence. Perhaps these negatives have less to do with cultural norms, but more of a product of a shared history in which colonisation has left both parties worse off, arguably, one more than the other. Australia has not yet dealt with its past atrocities, which should be done through a Truth and Reconciliation Commission like many other governments have across the world. This commission would benefit everyone in Australia and help those affected by intergenerational trauma to achieve some degree of resolution.

Cultural identity is one that transcends national identity and underpins a person's everyday lived experiences. This cultural identity is what brings people together; it takes form and also help to shape a national identity. In circumstances where national and cultural identity are in conflict this often leads to real-life conflict in the form of war and revolution- we have seen many examples of this in countries around the world. For instance, the people of Crimea and Sevastopol, who identify culturally with Russia, did not feel as though they were a part of the national identity of Ukraine. Following the conflicts in Ukraine, with the help of Russian forces, the people of Crimea and Sevastopol held a referendum, in which 96% of those who voted wished to join the Russian Federation. This referendum led to the annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation. We see a similar situation in Canada with the cultural identity of Québec in contrast to the rest of Canada, which may lead to Québec's independence from Canada in the coming years. The cultural amalgamation of Spain in which cultural identity

groups such as that of Catalonia, Andalusia, Galicia, Basque Country, and others, has lead to conflict for centuries with each region having strong nationalist movements fighting for independence. Conflicts in Africa have been brought about by the separation of cultural identities by national borders that were established by the colonisers of the continent. Some argue that to achieve long-term peace in Africa, the continent's borders must reflect its cultural identities, and while this may cause initial short term conflict, national identities will form around the cultural identities and internal peace will follow.

If Australia continues down this path of non-inclusive identification, the division of cultural identity will lead to conflict and the national identity will continue to be tarnished with the nation's past atrocities. However, if Australia can recognise this division of cultural identity, it can choose to do one of two things: allow Aboriginal communities to seek self-determination, and in turn self-governance, leading to a nation moving towards becoming an international continent akin to that of modern-day Europe. Or, Australia must reconcile its past atrocities through a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, not so we can feel sorry forever in a day, but so that we can begin healing and move forward together. Only then will Australia become a unified cultural identity in which all peoples are accepted and equal and only then, can we become a Republic and begin a new era of harmony, prosperity, and environmental sustainability.

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS

EMILY KAYTE JAMES/ GUNDITJMARA /YORTA-YORTA/ARTS

Three weeks ago Queen B released her new album *Lemonade* on music streaming service Tidal. I personally, have had the album on repeat since its launch, taking advantage of my free month trial of Tidal. In fact it's one of the only things keeping me going as I edit this publication. Since *Lemonade*'s release, a friend shared with me an article from the Sydney Morning Herald titled "What If Jessica Mauboy Pulled a Beyoncé?". This is a good question.

Statistically, and on paper, Indigenous women in Australia have many common-

those critics; in some ways Beyoncé "came out" as black (see "The Day Beyoncé Turned Black" - Saturday Night Live). Her visual album is a celebration of black culture and makes reference to popular black movements from Malcolm X and Martin Luther King JR to #blacklivesmatter. This dedication is a shameless tribute to a culture that is constantly being undermined and underappreciated by white people and is something that needs to be replicated in other similarly-oppressed societies.

The Sydney Morning Herald raises an im-

As someone who was raised by strong Aboriginal women, 'passive' is certainly not the descriptive term I would use.

alities with African American women. We are more likely to be victims of domestic and sexual violence, be single mothers, and more likely to die at the hands of our partners. As such, *Lemonade* is not an album full of love songs and happily ever afters; it is a hard hitting album made for women and it is empowering. But even more than that, *Lemonade* focuses heavily on the complexities and uncomfortable realities of relationships. And I think more importantly, this album is a black album. Over the years, Beyoncé has received criticism for not being black enough. Both herself and her husband have mostly stayed silent about the Black Lives Matter movement, which has brought them under scrutiny from many black activists. *Lemonade*, however, silences a lot of

portant question - Why can't Australian Indigenous women do a Beyoncé? The answer is, there is no reason. Indigenous women have more representation in the mainstream media now than ever before. The stunning and intelligent Magnolia Maymuru has made it to Nationals for Miss World. As well as Gold Logie wins from Miranda Tapsell, Deborah Mailman and the cast of *Ready for This* in both 2015 and 2016. But, is wider Australia ready? Probably not. Australian Indigenous women have been portrayed as the passive exotic other; who has been both over-sexualised and underrepresented in the media since its beginning. As someone who was raised by strong Aboriginal women, 'passive' is certainly not the descriptive term I would use.

Whilst in my opinion Jessica Mauboy in particular hasn't been doing us many favors in recent years (and I personally would really appreciate it if she'd stop singing the national anthem on Invasion Day), I will continue to be in her corner because I think we spend far too much time as women pulling each other down instead of building each other up. This movement of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal women empowering each other, only works if we're all on board, with no shame. Whilst I may not always

agree with what my fellow women have to say, I hope that I will always fight for their right to say it, because the lived experiences of Indigenous women are too often not considered or represented.

So, the time for our Lemonade is now. The proof is all around us; I see it every day when I talk to fellow strong, proud, and educated Indigenous women.

LISTEN : 2 BLACK 2 STRONG - A.B.ORIGINAL



MY TONGUE IS MY SPEAR

TYRONE BEAN / KABI KABI / BINDAL / MASTER OF TEACHING

My Tongue is my spear. My spear is my pride. And I am proud to be Aboriginal.

This is for all of our strong, beautiful, kind, gifted, resilient, determined, committed, and loving ancestors who have fought in countless wars, walked this country before us and have paved the path for future generations. This is for our Elders and community leaders that have been given the baton and continue to pass it on to future generations; this includes my beautiful grandparents Bill Glenbar and Iris Bell. I will keep this flame burning inside of me and will try to make a better place for all of humanity.

To everyone that has contributed to the suppression of my people, that includes the policy-makers of the White Australia Policy, the Northern Territory Intervention, all of the Prime Ministers and the political parties that have not and will not stand up for First Nation Australians due to guilt, lack of education or simply being scared of making a real difference. This is to all the media outlets that sell stories that perpetuate the negative stereotypes of my people. To all the uneducated, ignorant, and weak internet trolls that remain behind their computer screens and post something that is either racist, or plain and simply discriminative. I invite you all to come and walk in my shoes for a while and let's see how long you will last!

This story is not my own, it is shared by many, it is shared by a lot of future First Nation youth, who are well and truly on their

way to becoming community leaders. Thank you my brothers and sisters for being who you are. Unfortunately for all the suppressors out there, we are still standing strong and we aren't going anywhere; these are the perks of being a part of the longest continuing culture in the world - we are proud, strong, and resilient.

My name is Tyrone Bean and I am a proud Kabi-Kabi and Bindal man from Queensland, currently residing in Melbourne. My Grandfather is a Kabi-Kabi man from South East Queensland, Sunshine Coast and my Grandmother is a Bindal woman from Townsville; my totem is the Brolga. Both of these languages were taken away from my family due to the Stolen Generation, however, over the last two-three decades we have begun to find, restore, and record some language in the form of a Kabi-Kabi dictionary. This part of my identity is all from my maternal side, however I acknowledge my father's side of the family just as much as my mother's. My father is an Anglo-saxon Australian, with ancestral links to England, Scotland, and Wales. This is who I am.

Today I will share a little bit of my story with you and link this as much as possible, to Indigenous education. But first, I would like to say thank you to your western education system and government policies; they have given me the opportunity and strength to study my Masters in Teaching.

My view on the topic of Indigenous educa-

tion may not be what you are expecting. I am going to use this platform to tell a story, which in your eyes is not a worthy pedagogy. I am going to say a big FUCK YOU! for telling me what to do. Oh no, you thought that I was different and that I acted the way you wanted me to; not to challenge you and be grateful for what you have done for me. But now you are probably thinking I am just another Indigenous man, falling into a stereotype that you created. Storytelling within Indigenous education is a pedagogical process; it is defined as approaching learning through narrative. You know when you had to open up Google and search where Bindal and Kabi-Kabi country are? Well that map also comes from other Indigenous pedagogical frameworks: land link and learning maps.

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I was born too white for the black kids and too black for the white kids. I had to constantly prove to the each of these societies that I was a part of both of them, respectively. All I really knew is that I had different skin and different features, which made me feel unique. Fast forward to high school; I went to a low socio-economic state school here in Melbourne while my Mum still lived back home, on Kabi-Kabi country.

I was a kid who loved sport, being out in the bush, fishing, swimming (in waterholes, lakes, creeks, the beach - especially the beach on my country). Along with many other Indigenous youth, I excelled in sport and was lucky enough to receive a scholarship to Melbourne Grammar School starting in Year 10. I can honestly say, that if it

wasn't for football and cricket, I would not be here today.

Attending a boarding school was by far the most challenging experience of my life, at this point. Before Melbourne Grammar I was allowed to spend half my life in Melbourne and the other half back home on country. This meant I could learn from my cousins, uncles, aunties and grandparents about my people and culture. However, attending Melbourne Grammar and chasing sporting dreams meant this could not be the case. I was 3 years behind in literacy and numeracy and it has probably taken until my Undergrad, to close this gap. I was extremely shame about not succeeding and at how far behind I was. I was homesick. I felt like I didn't belong in the community, I wanted

to drop out. Instead I battled it out, crying in the office of the Indigenous support officer, Michael Ford at least once a week for the first 18 months and spending time with a welcoming family at the school. By the time I had overcome all of that anxiety, Year 12 had come around and the stress associated with that and pursuing a sporting career took over.

After being in the state football and cricket academy, training with an AFL club and having a sports manager, I got injured in my grand final and tore my ACL. I was not going to get drafted. Instead I was going to finish Year 12, which I did, and was then lucky enough to start a Bachelors of Arts (Extended) degree at arguably your best University institution in the country. As all this was

happening I was not able to go home because I could not give up on my tertiary education. Whilst completing my undergrad, I lost many uncles and aunties, which ultimately means that I have also lost more of my culture and education. Something that has been happening since settlement. For me, my right to education has been taken because I have to be here at university. In order for my people to have a voice, we have to be seen as educated and successful which ultimately means having to sacrifice going back home to learn culture. This is the same with almost every Indigenous person within the western education system. From primary school through to tertiary studies, we are forced to live your way, to learn your system, through your pedagogies to survive

stories, articles, photos, and comments do not mention me by name, when headlines contain an Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander person, they impact me and other First Nations people. There are more negative headlines about First Nations people than positive, and sadly these greatly impact how the rest of Australia views its First Nation Peoples. If I do not complete my Masters, it will mean I have let my people down. There are links between education and the White Australia Policy which have prevented many First Nation People from pursuing a tertiary education. I am breaking this cycle and forming a path for the next generation of Indigenous Youth to follow; I am showing them that if I can achieve this, so can they.

My people are not supposed to achieve anything. We are not meant to be Indigenous and educated in this Western World. I can only be one or the other; I have and will continue to walk with a foot in each world. I am not supposed to be here. As a First Nation Australian youth who is in was not supposed to make it past year 10, I challenge this system

in your world.

The current education system is structured to prevent First Nation Australian students from achieving academic success. My people are not supposed to achieve anything. We are not meant to be Indigenous and educated in this Western World. I can only be one or the other; I have and will continue to walk with a foot in each world. I am not supposed to be here. As a First Nation Australian youth who is in was not supposed to make it past year 10, I challenge this system.

As a proud First Nation Australian, I am challenged, ridiculed, and oppressed on a daily basis, directly or indirectly, and often through social media. Even though news

However, if my Grandfather and Grandmother pass away while I am still studying down here, essentially no matter what degree I end up with, I have failed and the system has won. It has again disallowed me to be educated on my own culture and if this cycle continues then the storytelling, dance, art, customary lore/law will be gone. I do not go to university for myself, I go to university to break a stereotype, to lead the pathway for Indigenous youth, for my family, for all the people in my community, and for all my ancestors before me. When I overhear comments from people in this institution stating that the topic of Indigenous Education "is boring", or "I don't like it", "I just want to do things that I am interested in and can relate to", "it's not me", that hurts.

It has taken hundreds of years for Indigenous Education to be represented within the curriculum. My people are finally beginning to receive a voice in a space that we are not meant to, and the change is too hard for you? My people are the proudest and oldest continuing living culture on this planet dating back over 60,000 years. We have been oppressed and challenged many a time and we keep bouncing back and proving you wrong. We will continue to fight until being Indigenous is synonymous with success.

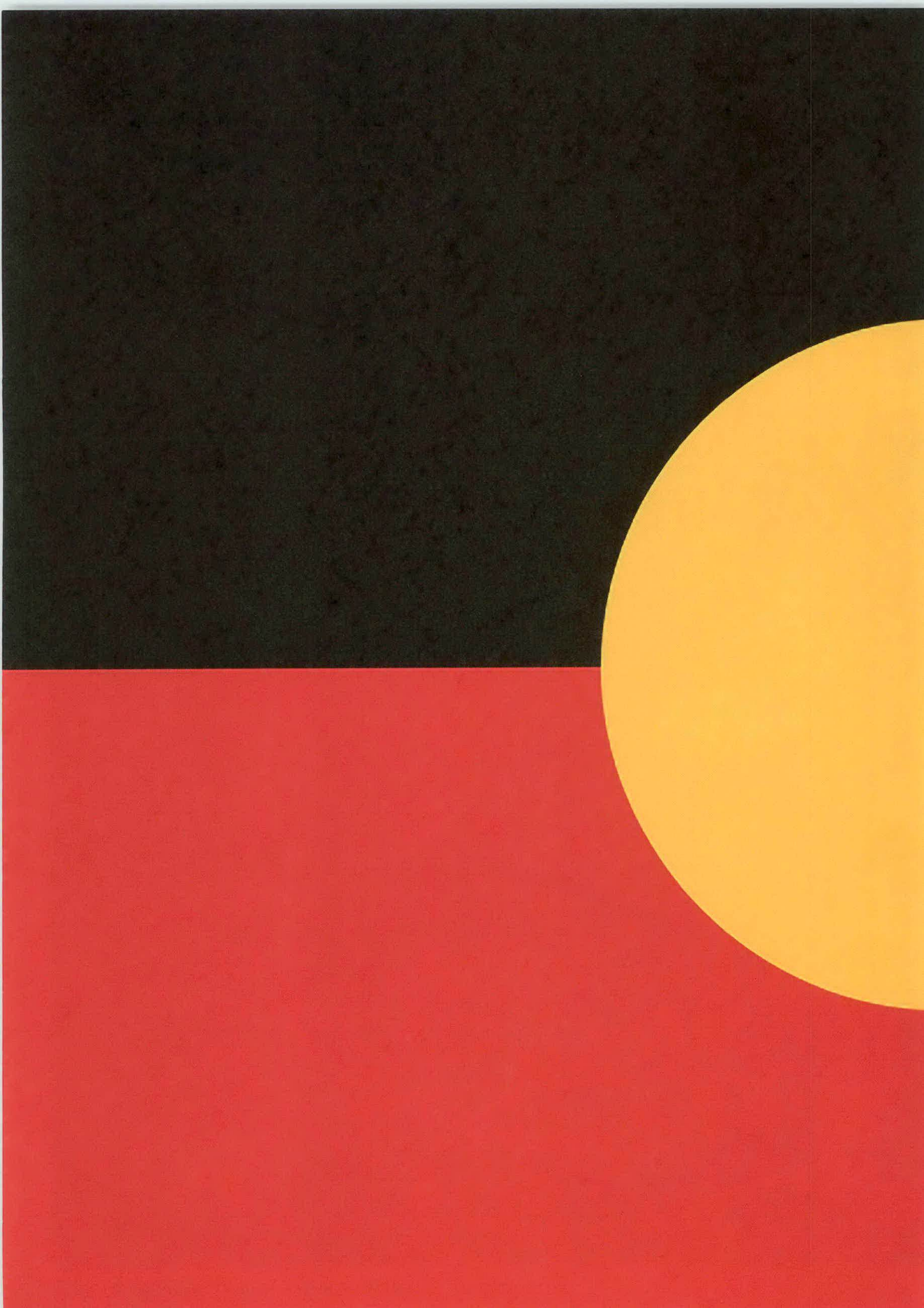
I am not asking for you to feel guilty and to drop everything and change the world back to what it used to be. I am asking that you and your networks acknowledge my people and the wrongs we have faced and continue to endure on a daily basis. Acknowledge the sacrifices my ancestors, Elders, and brothers and sisters have made. Start a discussion about the severe impacts that events like the White Australia Policy, the Stolen Generations, and the Northern Territory Intervention have had on First Nations people. Disallow the racial discrimination we as Indigenous people endure through the media, social, and otherwise. I am asking you to acknowledge my people as First Nation Australians within the constitution.

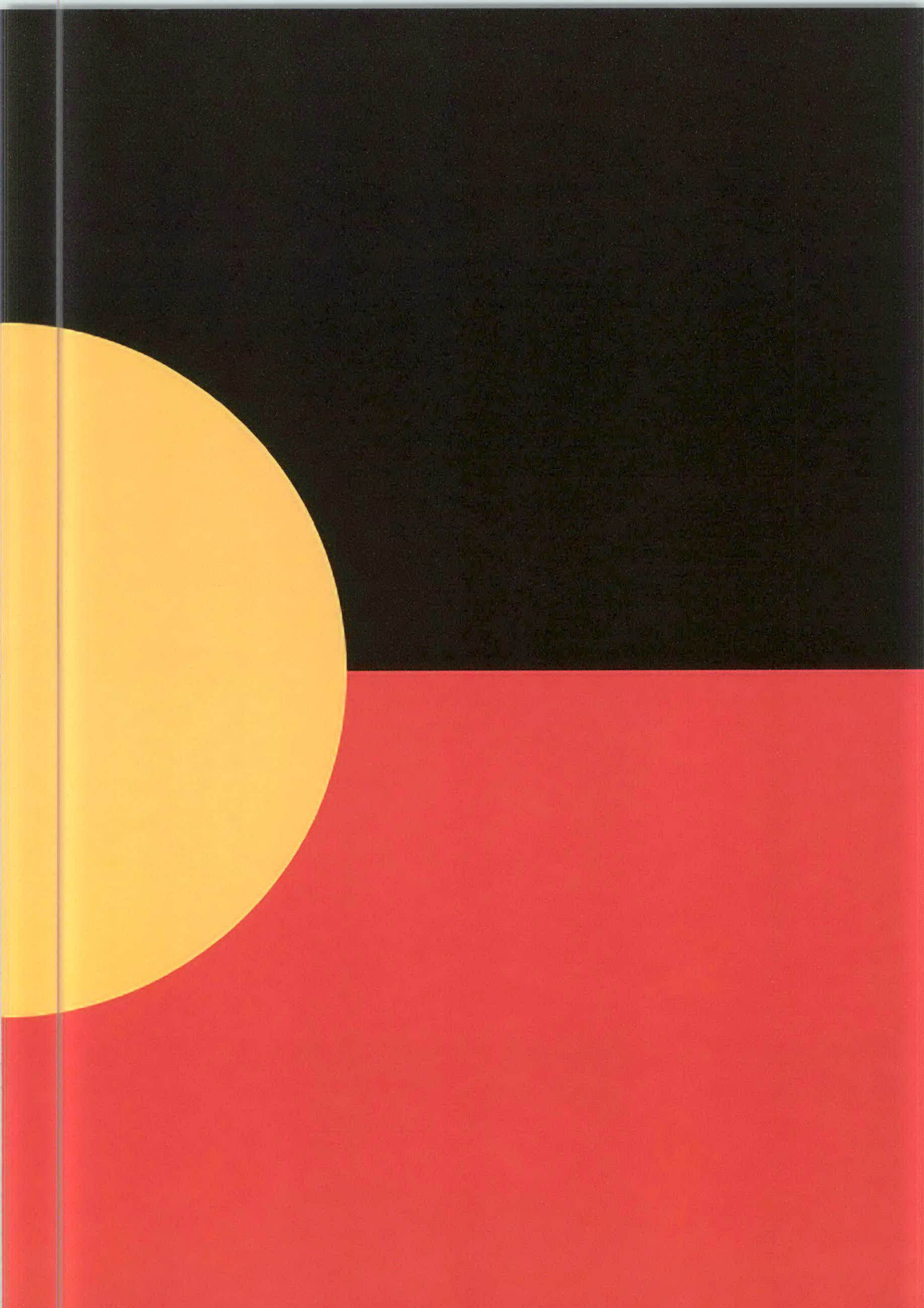
Now, having taken a short walk in my shoes, the final point I will raise to you is this: you have attempted to help Indigenous people succeed in the western world, and you have discussed how to teach First Nation's students and people, but why not flip this idea? Try thinking about what Indigenous people can teach you. If you look at it from this perspective, you will also see the gap between your people and mine, eventually, close.

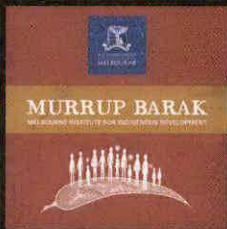
Yours sincerely,
Tyrone Bean











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